



[No. 2,335.]

TEACHER TROTTER AND HIS WANDERING BOYS.

[FEBRUARY 16, 1935.]



1. Whoops! Such a merry party were Teacher Trotter and his wandering boys the other week-end. Playing leap-frog they were, and continuing their travels across the Wild and Woolly West at the same time. "Keep the pot a-boiling!" cried Tich.



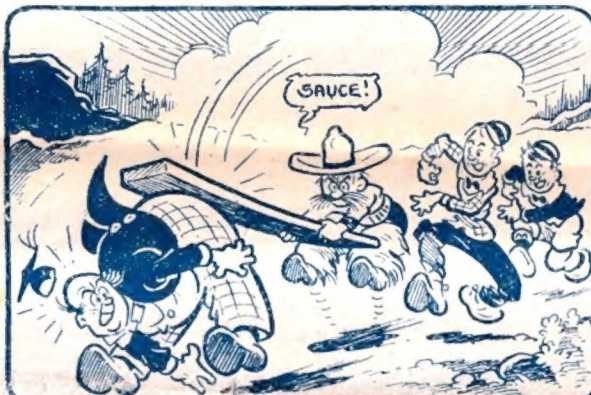
2. The Head leap-frogged over Tinker in fine style. "Ha, ha! This is the stuff!" he chortled. "I got my colours at school for this lark, when a lad." "Is that so?" tootled Tinker. "Did someone push you over and make you black and blue?"



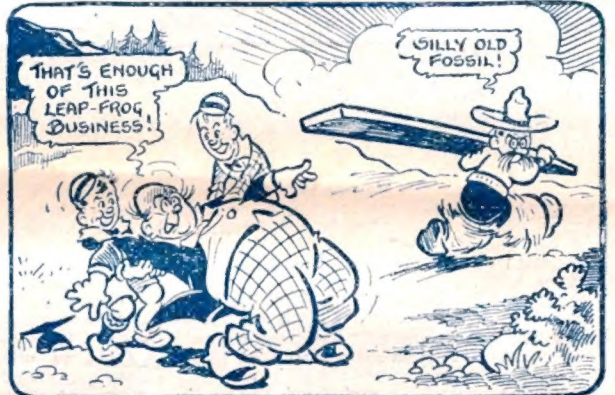
3. But the Head had no reply for Tinker's remark. He had spotted a small bent figure in the path ahead. "Aha! That little boy wants to join in!" he chirruped. "And so he shall!" Saying which, Trotter hopped over the small bent person.



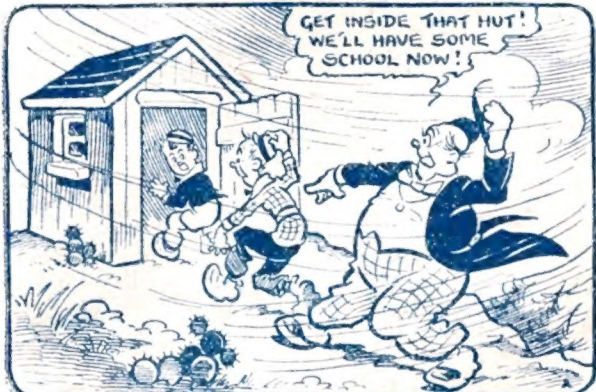
4. Then he bent down in front of him. "Come along, little man!" he cooed. "Let's see what you can do!" But that "little man" was no less than a small-sized six-shooting son-of-a-gun, who had been bending down to tie up his bootlace. M'm!



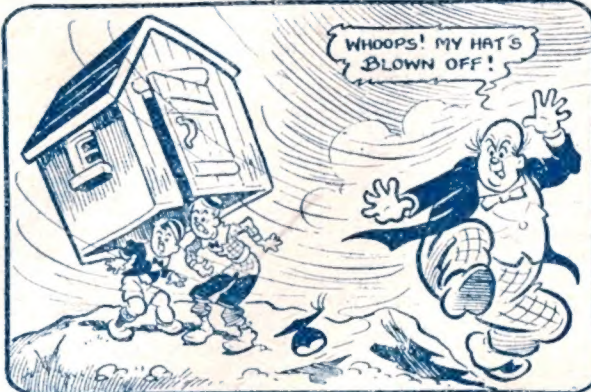
5. "Say, this guy gives me a pain in the neck!" he hooted. And picking up a stout piece of plank he applied it smartly to the back of the Head's pants—catching him bending! "He didn't want to share in the game!" smiled Tinker.



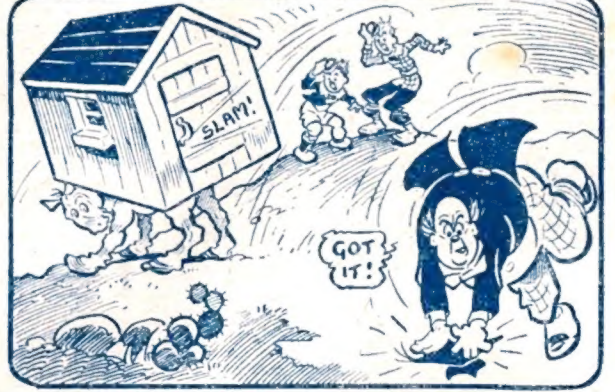
6. "But he's having his whack all right!" "Silly old fossil," snorted Midget Mike, departing quite huffy-like. "Buy him some marbles and he can get all excited!" But the Head had had enough. "No more of this leap-frog business!" he barked.



7. On they went, and Teacher Trotter spotted an empty hut. "Get inside there, you two!" he snapped to Tinker and Tich. "We're going to have some lessons now!" "Coo!" said little Tich. "He's got the breeze up!" But so had the wind.



8. Along came a fierce bit of draught, and it lifted off the Head's mortar-board. "My hat!" he gasped. "Come here, hat!" But at the same moment the same spot of breeze caught up the hut and sent it skywards. "Look at it!" cried Tinker.



9. "I've heard of houses having wings, but I've never seen a shed fly before." "Oh, shed no tears, chum," quoth Tich. "It's coming down." Down dropped the shanty, but it fell over a stray and fierce-looking nag, as Trotter trapped his hat.



10. "My goodness me!" wuffed the old lump of learning, as he staggered towards the shack. "Some wind! Hark at it moaning!" "Yes, the teeth of the gale must be aching!" smiled Tich, as they watched their Head open the shed door.



11. Trotter was hardly prepared for the striking reception he received. Bonk! The nag kicked, and two hard horseshoes caught the Head fairly and squarely where he wasn't expecting them. "Horseshoes aren't lucky for him!" said Tinker.



12. Trotter seemed to want to fold himself up on the ground and go bye-byes after this, so the lads didn't bother to wake him up. "We'll let him back us up instead," chortled Tinker. And the two college kids proceeded to play over-backs. Ha, ha!



## The Thrilling Complete Tale of a Crew of Mystery Men.

## SEAWAY ROBBERS

## The Surprise on the Ship.

**J**ACK of the Isles—otherwise Jack Steer—stood up in his motor-boat as it rose and fell over the heaving billows, and peered through the driving rain.

His eyes lit up as they beheld, some distance ahead, the outlines of an island.

"Good!" he exclaimed to himself, for he was the only one aboard. "There's Marakoa. The sooner I get there the better. It looks as if we're in for a mighty storm. Anyway, I don't suppose Dan Duggan will put out in weather like this."

That was the only comfort he had, for it was Jack's endeavour to catch Dan Duggan's schooner, the Emerald, before it left the island of Marakoa for the distant mainland.

Jack's uncle, Colonel Dering, was the Governor of the Opal Islands, of which Marakoa was one. Jack helped his uncle a great deal in his task, and to-day he had been dispatched to Marakoa to deliver an important message to the captain of the Emerald, Dan Duggan. Dan was an island trader, and to-day he was due to make the long journey to the mainland, and if he were missed it might be another week before the message could be taken.

The wind began to scream, whipping the spray off the top of the waves and sending it into Jack's face.

The rain also slashed down, making visibility very bad, and the waves rose higher every moment.

All Jack's skill was needed to keep the boat out of danger of being swamped, but every moment was precious, for it took him nearer and nearer to Marakoa.

But how close he was to it now he could not be sure, for the rain completely blotted it out. All he could go on was his compass, but suddenly he forgot all about that as an ominous sound came from the engine.

His face paled a little, for it might be that his life depended on that engine.

The engine began to splutter and miss, and the speed died down. The boat was in danger instantly. With one hand on the wheel Jack turned and lifted the engine cover.

Smack! A wave hit the side of the craft and nearly turned it over. Jack wrenched the wheel round to get her straight, just as water slapped into her, hissing over the engine.

It was impossible for Jack to examine the engine in these conditions, and even if he had been able to there was no time.

She was hurled this way and that, over the crest of one wave, then to dive down into a valley of water.

But when she rose she was broadside on to the next wave.

It struck her with smashing force, and the next instant Jack was hurled clean out, to be thrown into a cavernous scoop of green water.

The boat rolled right over, then sank like a stone.

Jack came up gasping, and struck out for his life. He just had a fighting chance to reach Marakoa, if only his strength would hold out.

Whether he was making headway or not he could not tell. But swimming was frightfully hard work, and even his big strength soon began to give out.

He was losing hope when suddenly he saw a sight that sent a thrill through him.

A schooner, heeling over with the wind, emerged out of the rain mist and came bearing down full at him!

There was scarcely time for him to get out of the way. But in that short time he recognised the ship as Captain Dan Duggan's Emerald. So Dan had started, then, even in the face of this storm.

Next moment the Emerald was sweeping past him. Some of her ropes were flying over the side.

Jack made a despairing grab at them. One snaked through his fingers, but he managed to get a grip on another.

Then, as he held on for dear life, he felt himself being dragged through the water.

He had a fleeting glimpse of men aboard watching his plight, then he pulled himself in hand over hand, grasped the rail, and clambered on to the deck.

He staggered to his feet and grasped the side.

He heard a hoarse shout, rivalling the screaming wind, then, to his amazement, he found three dark-skinned men come rushing at him.

One struck him a savage blow before he could quite realise that he was the object of an attack. Then, as he recovered himself, Jack hit out at another of his assailants and knocked him sprawling.

But just then two other men made a rush at him. One dived at his legs, and the other at his head.

Down went Jack with a crash, and already weakened by his struggle in the sea, the bump he got on the back of his head as it hit the deck dazed him.

A sallow-faced man with a thin black moustache, attired in a suit of dirty white canvas came running up to the group.

"It's Jack of the Isles!" he cried excitedly. "Tie him up—tie him to the mast!"

Rope was soon procured. It was passed round Jack's body, and he was hoisted up and placed with his back against the mast. And there he was fastened securely.

The instant that was done the men dashed



"Let me go free and I will save the ship!" cried Jack.

back to their stations, while the man in the canvas suit returned to the wheel, which had been taken over by a subordinate.

A wave dashing over the side doused Jack from head to feet and brought him round.

Very surprised he was to find himself on the deck of the Emerald, the ship belonging to his friend Dan Duggan—and a prisoner.

Where was Dan? Why was he not in charge of his own ship? And who was the man at the wheel, the man who had ordered the attack, and who was apparently in charge?

But Jack put these questions out of his mind as he gazed with alarm at the plight of the vessel. The seas were now a terrific height, and the schooner pitched and tossed and rolled so much that the men had to hold on to ropes to keep their feet.

There was a fearful crack as one of the sails tore away, fluttered in the wind like a huge flag, then broke away and was carried off by the screaming wind.

The sailors, nearly all of whom appeared to be Malays, shouted in fear and stared helplessly at the raging sea.

The rain ceased now, allowing those aboard to see ahead.

A little to the right of them the island of Karoka could be seen. Running from its extreme end was a foaming line of breakers, which marked a coral reef.

About half-way along it, and perched high on the reef, lay an old wreck.

Jack shouted with all his might, and the man at the wheel turned his head. Jack beckoned to him, for one of his arms was not tied.

Giving the wheel to one of the men, the mysterious skipper made his way nearer to Jack.

"If you want to save the ship and your lives get round to the lee of Karoka!" yelled Jack.

"I know that, but in this wind we'd never make it!" shouted the skipper.

"Dan Duggan could do it!" cried Jack.

"Where is he?"

"Where he can't give us any help!" was the answer.

"If you don't get shelter the ship'll sink!" cried Jack. "There's a way through the reef—just one spot—get through and the ship will be saved!"

"So I've heard!" was the reply. "No one can do it. A month ago someone tried to take that ship through the reef, and look at her!"

And the skipper pointed to the wreck.

## Hemmed In.

"I'll take her through!" shouted Jack. "I know the gap. I've been through it scores of times! Get these ropes off me!"

"Let him try, boss!" shouted one of the men, who had strained his ears to listen.

"Let me go free and I will save the ship!" cried Jack. "I tell you this boat will never ride out this storm!"

"All right, then!" nodded the skipper. "Help me get the ropes off him, Marla!"

The two men set to work, but they had to hold on to the mast with their right hands while they worked with the other, or they would have been washed overboard.

The ropes fell from Jack. A lurch of the ship sent him sliding along the deck, fortunately towards the wheel. The man there bent down and grabbed him, and Jack was able to regain his feet.

"Stand aside!" yelled Jack. "I'm taking charge now to try to save your miserable skins!"

Jack stood at the wheel, gripping it hard with both hands, chin thrust forward, straining his eyes at the line of breakers.

The gap was just left of the wreck; in fact, it was just on the edge that the ship had piled up.

Gradually he moved the wheel over, and slowly the ship headed straight for the reef, apparently to its doom. She heeled over, lurched, and tossed. Big waves smashed against her side, and Jack was being almost continually doused with spray. But he clung to the wheel, his eyes on the spot where he knew the gap to be.

The roar of the waves on the reef was now

deafening. They were only fifty yards from it now. Jack clenched his teeth. Veins stood out on his forehead. Could he do it? A few yards either way and another wreck would go to join the first one.

Every man of the crew held his breath. Some yelled in excitement. Others prepared to jump overboard and chance being washed ashore.

Now the reef was almost under them. Jack waited for the crash. There was just a bumping and scraping.

The Emerald shot through the gap and was riding in comparatively calm water! And here she was sheltered by the hills of the island.

The ship was safe!

Down came what remained of the sails with a run. There was a rattle as the anchor cable ran out.

Jack turned round with a grin. But the skipper came towards him, a scowl on his face.

"You've saved the ship, yes," he said. "But how do we get out of here?"

And he swept a hand round.

"You're right, Mr. Mystery Man," returned Jack. "You're in a lagoon, completely hemmed in by reefs, and there's only one way out—the gap—the way we came in. I don't fancy your luck when you try to get out!"

The significance of these words was not lost on several of the crew who heard them.

They had been caught in a trap, and they knew it.

They made a rush at Jack. With his back to the wheel he met them. Two dropped with cracks to the jaw, another staggered back with a broken nose. But another dashed up with a maul-spike in his hand. He threw it, striking Jack on the temple, and he sank to his knees.

Swiftly he was bound hands and feet.

"Throw him down below!" yelled the skipper. "We'll have to take him with us now. This storm'll soon blow itself out, then we'll try to get out through the reef—and Jack of the Isles will do the steering or he'll get plugged!"

Jack was picked up by several of the men and carried down the stairs to the lower deck. He was thrown down like a sack in a passage, and back they raced to the upper deck, for much was to be done to make the ship fit for the voyage.

Jack quickly came round and looked about him. He guessed from the sounds above that the crew were busy. He found himself in the narrow passage, and close beside him was a dark recess used for storing old gear, having a door, or gate, of iron bars.

Suddenly, to Jack's amazement, he saw a hand holding a knife, emerge from between the bars!

"Hist! Don't make a noise!" came a voice from the darkness of the cavity.

With rapid movements the edge of the knife sawed away at his bonds. One by one they were severed, and finally Jack was free.

He knelt up and peered into the cavity, to see the face of a boy. He was a native, and Jack recognised him as being employed by a white planter on Marakoa.

"That you, Krimba?" he whispered. "Half a tick, and I'll try to get you out." He found the gate was fastened by a long iron bar, so fixed as to be out of reach of Krimba's short arms. In a few seconds Jack had got the gate open, and the boy sidled out.

"What's been happening on board the Emerald?" asked Jack.

"Cap'n Duggan, him load up with master's stock and much pearls also," whispered the boy. "But when Cap'n Duggan and him crew ashore Marbos and other men take ship and go away. Me on ship, so they put me here."

"Who is Marbos—the chap with the moustache?"

"Yes, master," said Krimba. "Him and other men, they come to Marakoa to help in work. They steal ship to get much valuables."

"I see," said Jack. "Look here. We're in the lagoon on Karoka. I brought the ship in here. They're going to try to make me take her out again. Now if we could only block that gap up! There's a wreck lying on the edge of the gap. It'd fill it up if it toppled over. If only we had an explosive, Krimba!" he added.

"What these, master?" asked Krimba, stepping back into the recess and taking out an object like a round tin. "Me see master on

Marakoa use them for to blow coral up—bang!"

Jack seized the can and examined it. "Gosh, Krimba," he breathed, "you've solved the difficulty. These are time bombs, and water won't spoil them. Will you try swimming to the reef with me if we get the chance?"

"You bet, master!" grinned Krimba.

Jack put the can carefully in a side pocket. "Follow me, and be over the side like a flash, Krimba," whispered Jack.

Krimba nodded and beamed. He followed Jack along to the stairs, and they crept up them. Peeping along the deck, they saw a crowd of the men trying to get order amongst the tangled ropes.

Jack nodded. He and the boy dashed across the deck, and, clambering on to the side, they dived over, just as their flight was seen. Yells of rage burst from a dozen throats.

Jack and Krimba swam their hardest for the reef in the comparatively calm waters of the lagoon. Sharp reports mingled with the scream of the wind. Bullets zipped into the water round them, but by swimming under the surface as long as they dared they offered but poor targets.

"Let them go!" cried Marbos. "They swim to the gap, but they are mad!"

On the ocean side of the reef the waves burst with violence, but on its lagoon side it was possible to scramble on to the rocks with safety. This Jack and Krimba did. They made their way under the hull of the wreck, almost where it overhung the unseen gap below water.

Jack explored the reef at that spot, and then found what he wanted, a deep hollow. He thrust the bomb into it, having first timed it to go off in five minutes' time.

"All ready, Krimba!" he cried.

Along the lagoon side of the reef they scrambled as fast as they could go. They had almost reached the palm-fringed beach when there came a terrific explosion. A fountain of water and pieces of rock flew into the air from almost under the wreck.

The old ship rocked, then tilted over and plunged into the water with a mighty splash.

Then it came to rest, half its bulk visible, the other half completely filling the gap.

The ship-robbers were trapped! They could be seen dancing with rage on the deck of the Emerald. Presently they lowered two boats.

"They're going to get us if they can," murmured Jack. "But you'll be all right, Krimba, as a friendly native tribe, Jack's keen ears detected the sharp crack of a snapping twig, and, advancing cautiously, he presently made out the forms of Marbos and his men who were searching the forest for him.

Marbos must have guessed Jack would make for the village, and found a short cut to intercept him.

The rogues were well spread out so as to thoroughly comb the woods, and it would have meant a considerable detour to safely pass them, but Jack had a better plan.

Climbing a tree close by, he beckoned Krimba to do the same, and then, working his way along a branch, Jack leapt to the next tree, and from there to the next, and so on.

And thus the two of them passed right over Marbos, who never for a moment thought of looking in the tree-tops for his victims.

Presently Jack thought it safe to get down.

Jack led the way in amongst the trees and to the village of a friendly native tribe about a mile inland. Enlisting their help, the robbers were soon surrounded and overpowered.

"When the storm goes down we'll blow that old wreck out of the gap, and the Emerald will sail back with her captain aboard," said Jack. "The natives here will soon send a smoke message across. And you'll get a fine reward for what you've done, Krimba."

And Jack was right.

THE END.

(Starts next week: "The Lone Outlaw.")



DEAR COMIC CUTLETS.—Good! I've got a little corner to myself this week, but, phew!—what with all the good things in this number, it's a bit of a squeeze, as the Brazil said to the nutcrackers.

I've got a special titbit of news for you. I dare say you are all sorry that the adventures of Jack of the Isles comes to an end this week, but I can promise you a yarn to equal it in thrills to take its place. It will be called

## THE LONE OUTLAW

and it is a stirring tale of Red Indians and mystery in the Wild West. Make a point of starting this grand new story from the very first chapters, which appear next week.

Don't forget to order your COMIC CUTS to be saved for you regularly every Friday. It's too good to miss.

Cheerio, till next Friday.

CLARENCE CUTS.

16-2-35





Nick Waller has been sent to Blackmoor School by a strange benefactor. Many mysterious happenings occur, and the school is visited by a queer Chinaman. One day Nick rescues the Chinaman from a railway track.

### The Hunted Man.

**"LI SING!"** Nick Waller uttered the name in astonishment as he stared at the face of the man they had rescued from the peril of the railway points.

"You!" he gasped. He could hardly believe it. The professor's Chinese servant was the last person in the world Nick had expected to meet amid the wild moorland country of Devon.

"Whatever brings you here?" he asked. The Chinaman stared back at him with expressionless eyes, and now that the danger was past his face was like a mask.

"I am grateful to you and your friend for helping me," he said, still breathing heavily. "It was kind of you, and I shall not soon forget."

"Yes, but—" "It would be better if you asked nothing," Li Sing interrupted significantly. And there was a most awkward pause.

"Do you mean to say you two know each other?" McCowan asked in surprise; and Nick nodded—aware that he was blushing furiously. "Yes," he said. "This is Li Sing, and he—"

But again Nick broke off. He felt something pointed against his ribs, and, looking down, quickly stiffened. The Chinaman was pressing a dagger against his coat, and even in the dusk there was no mistaking the Oriental design. It was an exact replica of the dagger which had startled the school by crashing through the study window a few nights ago!

"So this is the explanation of the mysterious Chinaman who's been hanging round the school," Nick thought. "It was Li Sing! He hurled that dagger! His was the face old Gibbs, the porter, saw in the quad that night!"

Why? What did it mean? For what reason was the professor's servant shadowing the school like this?

Nick bit his lip to keep back the many questions he wanted to ask. And that little gesture in itself brought to him another baffling query: Why must he not ask questions? Why was there so much mystery?

He stared at Li Sing blankly, and, unblinking, those narrow, inscrutable eyes stared back. "Remember," said the Chinaman softly. "Be careful what you say!"

And without another word he turned abruptly and walked away into the gloom. They watched him climb over the wooden fence at the side of the railway track and disappear into the trees.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" McCowan muttered. "That's a queer chap if you like! And you say you know him?"

"I—I met him at my guardian's office in London," Nick answered. He was glad McCowan had not seen the incident of the dagger, but Nick was aware of his friend's puzzled scrutiny, and went redder than ever.

"He must think quite a lot of you to talk about you in his sleep," the Scottish junior said.

"What do you mean?" Nick demanded, and McCowan gave a shrug.

"Didn't you notice how he was dressed? That long black coat and the hat pulled down over his eyes? That's how old Joby Darrel said his lodger was dressed!"

"You mean—" "I bet you anything," McCowan declared, "that Chink's the mysterious Mr. Brown."

And Nick could only wonder afresh. Was the Scottish junior right?

He was looking at Nick harder than ever. "You know," he said slowly, "I'm beginning to think that you and this Chinese business and old Joby's lodger are somehow all linked together."

"Oh, rot!" Nick retorted, trying to laugh it off. But McCowan was persistent.

"It's true," he nodded. "And there's certainly some mystery about you. I wonder what it is?"

"I—I think we'd better be getting back to the school," Nick muttered, turning away hastily. "We're no end late for call-over already."

But they were destined to be later still, for a fog was rolling in from the sea. It enveloped them like a dense white cloud and soon they were finding it difficult to keep to the moorland path.

"Oh, blow this!" McCowan exclaimed. "We look like getting lost if we're not careful!"

They pushed on slowly, shoulder to shoulder, their coat collars turned up, their hands thrust deep into their pockets; and then suddenly they heard a sound which made them stop dead.

"What on earth was that?" Nick gasped. "Sounded like a gun to me," McCowan retorted. "Listen!"

They stood still, looking about them. In the silence of the wintry twilight they could hear voices—an agitated, far-off cry of "This way—quick!" And then an answering "Right-ho!" that was near at hand.

"Sounds like a bit of bother somewhere," McCowan said. "I'm sure that was a gun, aren't you? And, hark—"

He broke off at the sound of running feet, and they swung round to see a dark form come racing towards them out of the mist.

"My hat! A prison warder!" McCowan exclaimed, recognising the uniform and the gun the man was carrying.

"Don't move!" he cried harshly, and the next instant the two boys were blinking in the dazzling beam of the torch the man flashed in their faces.

"Huh! Schoolboys, eh?" he grunted in disappointed tones. "What the blazes are you doing out here?"

"We're trying to grope our way back to Blackmoor School," the Scottish junior grinned. "Any objections?"

"No; but I don't want none of your saucer. And you'd better get a move on," the man said warningly. "It isn't safe for schoolboys on the moor to-night."

"Why? What's wrong?" Nick asked. "We thought we heard a shot—"

And the warder nodded. "I expect you did," he said. "There's a convict escaped from the prison."

"Gee whizz!" gasped Nick. "Got away early this afternoon. Cleverest getaway in years, too. Somebody helped him from outside, of course—and they couldn't have picked a better day for it. We've been combing the moor for hours, and we think he's come this way. One o' my mates thought he spotted him a few minutes ago, dodgin' through some bushes—that's when you heard the gun. I suppose you kids have seen nothing of him?" he asked. "Smallish man—little

finger of his left hand missin'. Called the Snake because of the way he can worm himself out of tight corners."

The chums had to admit that they had not had the thrill of meeting such a remarkable gentleman, and with a further warning the warder went on his way.

"Poor chap—I don't envy any convict trying to get away on a night like this," Nick said, with a shudder, as they went groping on through the fog.

But they saw no sign of the hunted man, and eventually they reached the school without further incident.

"Report at once to Mr. Radley!" old Gibbs, the porter, grunted as he came to unlock the gates for them.

"There's a convict at large, Gibbo!" McCowan grinned excitedly.

"Ay, and it looks to me as if he's had a bosh at one o' you!" retorted the old soldier, with a shrewd glance at the bandage round Nick's head.

Mr. Radley, the Housemaster, when they reported their belated return in his study, wanted to know all about that bandage.

"I slipped on the cliffs and banged my head against a piece of rock, sir," Nick explained,

with perfect if not complete truth, and doing his best not to betray Jeff Macey's bullying interference.

And, satisfied that the injury was not serious, the Housemaster nodded.

"You were not present at call-over, so, of course, you did not hear the headmaster's order that until further notice the entire school is gated," Mr. Radley said.

"On account of the convict, sir?" McCowan asked, and Mr. Radley's eyebrows went up.

"You know already, then?" he exclaimed. "We were stopped by a warder," Nick explained.

"They will soon get him, of course," Mr. Radley said. "In a few hours I expect the unfortunate fellow will be back in his cell again."

But when the last light in the school went out that night the hunted man was still at large.

### The Haunted Cave.

**T**HE next morning there were two letters in the rack for Nick.

He recognised the professor's handwriting on the envelope of one, and was glad that he had taken it into the quiet of the library to read, for it was a very disturbing letter.

"I want you to do another little service for me, Nick," his guardian wrote. "It is quite simple, but I must ask you to maintain the strictest secrecy and care over it. As you probably know, near the school there is a certain part of the shore called Brigands' Gap, where I believe in the olden days smugglers used to land with their contraband. To the left of this gap there is a cave which is reputed—foolishly, of course—to be haunted. Well, I want you to pay a visit to this cave at midnight on the day you receive this letter. In the cave you will meet a friend of mine. I want you to lead this man to the crypt under the White Chapel. That is all. But you must take nothing with you except your pocket torch, and be certain not to use it until you are well inside the cave. Absolute care and secrecy are essential. You understand?"

And the letter was signed: "Your affectionate guardian, Professor X."

Nick read the letter with a growing sense of dismay. He looked round with a guilty start—as if fearful lest the very books on the shelves of this old library had eyes to spy upon the secret information that astonishing letter contained.

The why or wherefore of it Nick couldn't understand. Nor why it was necessary to meet this friend of the professor at midnight in a cave upon the seashore and lead him to the crypt under the White Chapel.

Why? For what purpose? The professor had given him no reason for performing these mysterious services. All Nick had been told was that in return for sending him to this school he would be expected to perform certain small duties from time to time—little commands which he must obey "without question!"

That had been the bargain. And Nick had agreed, promised to do all, anything the professor asked of him. He had not dreamt at the time that those "certain small services" would be anything like this!

The first had been bad enough—and puzzling, too—and only by the merest chance had it avoided ending in disaster. But this was surely asking too much. Breaking bounds after lights-out when the school was gated! If he were discovered it would mean expulsion and disgrace.

Didn't the professor realise that? Dully and mechanically Nick opened the other letter. It was from Sheila, his sister, writing from "Sunshine Convalescent Home, San Morica" in the South of France.

It was such a happy letter—with a lightness and a joy Sheila had never before known. She said how lovely it all was—how much stronger she was getting day by day. And she finished with:

"Oh, Nick, how good it is of the professor to do all this for me!"

And as Nick read that he suddenly knew how right she was. He felt mean and paltry for the resentful thoughts he had cherished. Of course, it was good of the professor. He had taken them both out of poverty and given them happiness and comfort. Above all, he was giving Sheila a new health and strength. And for her sake, then, Nick must do everything the professor asked—no matter how hard it was, how mystifying, how dangerous.

Folding the letters, he stuffed them carefully away in his pocket. But all through the day he thought of the task that was before him. He wanted to confide in McCowan, but he knew he dare not. For the second time during his short life at Blackmoor he was to break bounds, and he hoped this time he would be more successful than the last.

The night was frosty, and the moon was high. At half-past eleven there was a faint creak in the Fourth Form dormitory as Nick slipped carefully out of bed.

He listened a moment to the measured breathing from the sleeping boys, and decided that he was safe to dress.

Then, shoes in hand, he crept cautiously out of the dormitory and down the stairs to his study, where he put on his overcoat and wrapped a woollen scarf round his throat.

The school was dark and still as he escaped out into the quadrangle through a side door on the ground floor—and there the bitter cold of the wintry night struck him. He climbed over the school wall, and, dropping into the lane beyond, stood still, listening and shivering.

Not a sound. Not a stir. Only the moon-

light, cold and clear, turning the world to silver and shadow.

He thought of the escaped convict, and his heart beat fast. He could imagine every bush and tree held that lurking fugitive. Stealing his nerves, Nick hurried on his way, and was half-way across the moorland path to the cliffs when out of the shadow of a little group of spruces ahead a figure stepped.

"Just a minute," said a voice; and Nick caught his breath.

It was the warder who stopped them in the fog!

Nick didn't stop to think. In a flash he had whipped off his cap and thrust that incriminating piece of evidence into his coat pocket. Then, turning quickly, he ran for all he was worth.

He heard the warder shout "Stop!" behind him, and expected every second to feel a bullet whiz past his head. But, throwing caution to



"Is—is anybody there?" Dick cried. The deadly silence unnerved him.

the wind, his only thought was to escape without being questioned and recognised.

A quick glance over his shoulder told Nick that the warder was in pursuit. Nick ran till he thought his lungs would burst with the effort and his legs give way under him—and it was only by twisting this way and that through the shadows that he at last managed to put the man off the trail.

He reached the spot where the cliffs were low and a winding path sloped down to Brigands' Gap. He was hot and breathless, but he dare not pause. He ran down the crunching shingle to the beach—and who knew but what here, too, the rocks held those watching men? But it was a risk he had to take, and all he could do was trust to luck.

The tide was in and murmured at his feet. Across the water the moon was painting a silvery pathway. But Nick had no time for such things then; his eyes were searching the tiny bay for the entrance to the haunted cave.

He found it at length at the far end of the Gap—a narrow opening in the cliff that was difficult to see until one was almost upon it.

And very cautiously he made his approach.

His heart was beating faster than ever. He stood in the darkness of the opening, a lonely figure amid the mystery of the night. He thought of the tales he had heard about this cave—the phantom buccaneer whose legend made it a place for all but the bravest to avoid. And then he thought of the professor's friend, who must be waiting somewhere within.

It was all so terribly quiet—each crunching step he took unnerved him. He took out his torch and flashed the white beam of light around.

"Is—is anybody there?" he said.

There was no answer—only the eerie echo of his own voice. And when he was deciding that the "friend" whoever he was, was gone, Nick heard the faint sound of a movement somewhere near.

He swung round quickly, flashing the torch. "Where are you?" he asked.

The reply was a laugh—a cackling, fiendish laugh that chilled him through.

It came from above, and, jerking the torch up, he nearly dropped. For there, glaring down at him in the circle of light, was a face—a horrible, grinning face, white as no living face could be.

Just for a moment it hovered above him thus, then with a rush it seemed to sweep down upon him, and two powerful hands gripped Nick by the throat.

(What is the reason for this sudden attack? Read more of this exciting tale in next Friday's COMIC CUTS.)

AMAZING SUCCESS OF THE GREAT  
NEW PAPER, THE  
**JOLLY COMIC**  
Full of Laughs and Thrills—Try It—1d.



# THE TWINS & THEIR UNCLE TOM



1. Jackie and Sammy were having great fun with their little sledge, but Uncle Tom soon found it rather upsetting. And he was most annoyed with them about it!



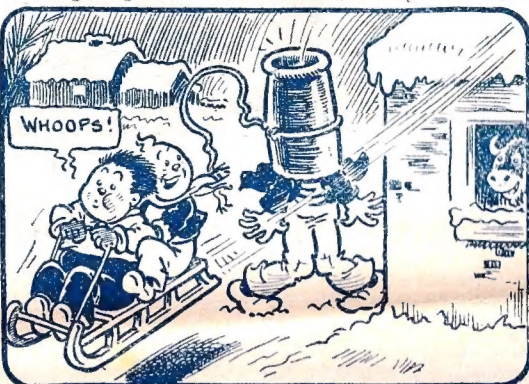
2. He said that if he caught them in the yard again, well—they'd catch it! So they took themselves and the sledge up to the roof, right out of uncle's way.



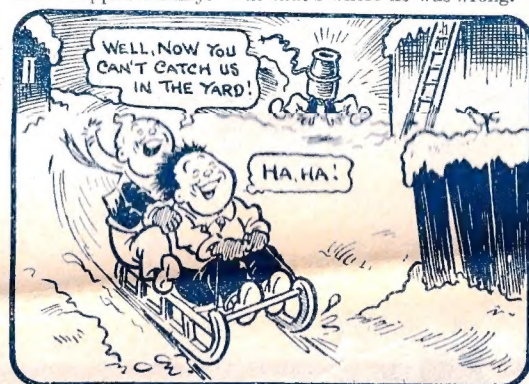
3. "Here we go!" gurgled Jackie, as they sped down the snowy slipway. But next moment he spied Tom coming along below. "Quick, brakes, Sammy!" he cried.



4. And very promptly his twin sent their rope over the chimney. "That's stopped us from going too far!" slipped Sammy. But that's where he was wrong.

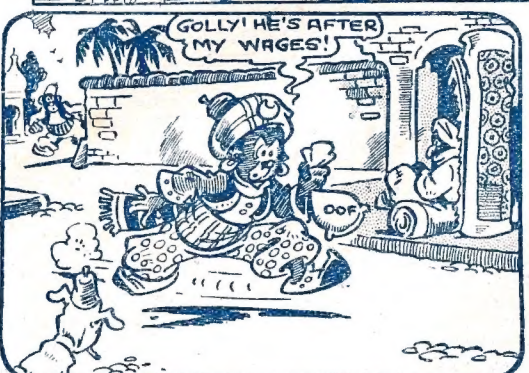


5. That chimney was not used to being tugged like that, and it came rolling after the sledge. And as the twins whizzed off the roof it dropped—plop!—on Tom.

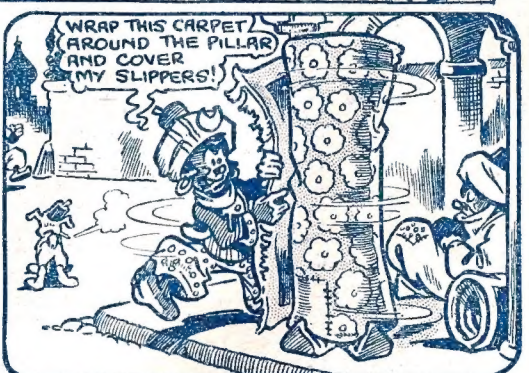


6. "Good-ho!" gurgled Sammy. "That's put him out of action!" And he had to wait for Fairy to release him, whilst the twins sledged around the yard!

## TOMATO KHAN THE PERKY PERSIAN



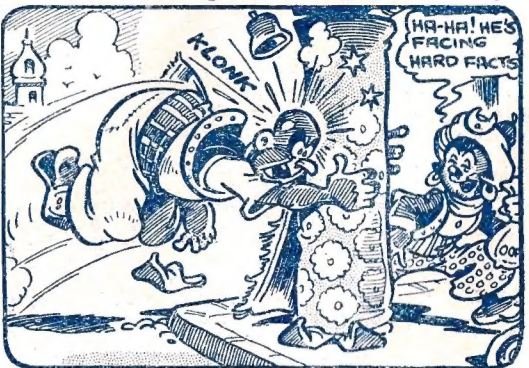
1. Our perky little Persian was just stepping home with his week's wages when Aloumi, a nasty bit of bully work, spotted him and the wages, too! "Verily, there is nothing easier than helping thyself," he chirped.



2. "Not if I can help it!" tootled Tomato, in posh Persian. And he made quick tracks to get out of Aloumi's way, and ere he had gone very far he spied a vendor of Persian carpets slumbering by the roadway.



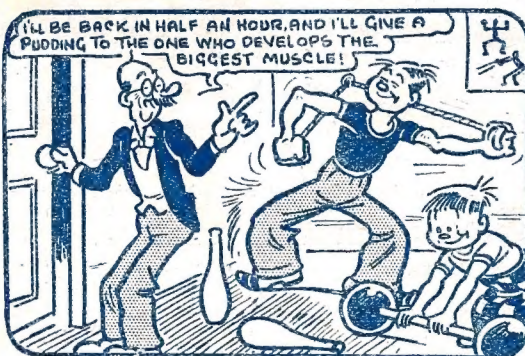
3. "That looks like the solution to my little problem!" our laddie laughed. And removing his footwear, he placed them so that they just peeped out from beneath a long roll of carpet. "He's in that!" hissed Aloumi.



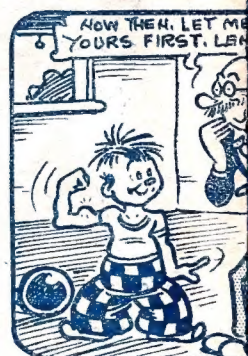
4. And he charged full pelt at the carpet, hoping to barge Tomato Khan right over and collect his cash. But all he collected was a dent in the dome, 'cos Persian rugs are hard. And Tomato just ha, ha-ed!

## KING OF COMICS

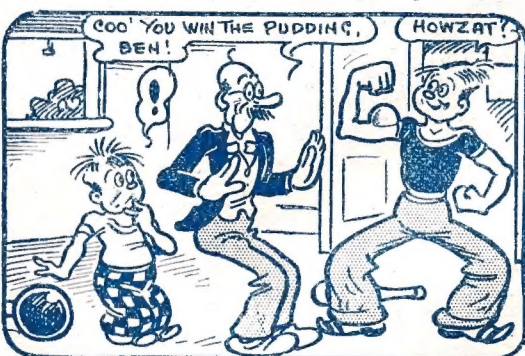
## BIG BEN AND LEN



1. Big Ben and his little brother Len managed to raise a spot of enthusiasm for Pa's muscle-raising contest. "Don't forget, boys," burbled the old lad, "the one who has the biggest muscle gets a pudding!"



2. Half an hour later a small lump on his strong cooed with glee. "Pooh, cutting a rubber ball in half!"



4. "My, oh my!" guffed Pa, in great astoundment, when he saw the size of Ben's "muscle." "That certainly wins the pudding, lad! What a whopper!"



5. "Oh, that's only 'p' Ben. Pa promised to send the little lad got busy pe

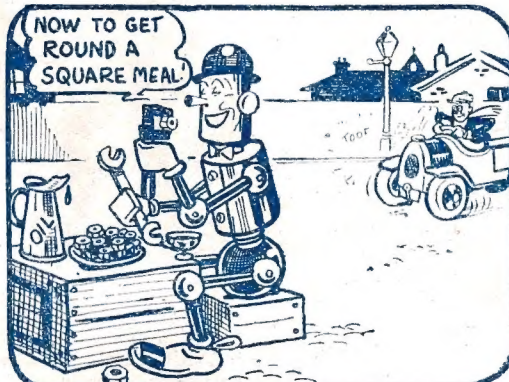


7. "The best things to put in puddings are teeth, any old day!" Saying which, the big boy took a hefty bite, and then wished that he hadn't! M'yes!



8. "Ow!" he yowled. And he cast that painted window, catching Pa a lov

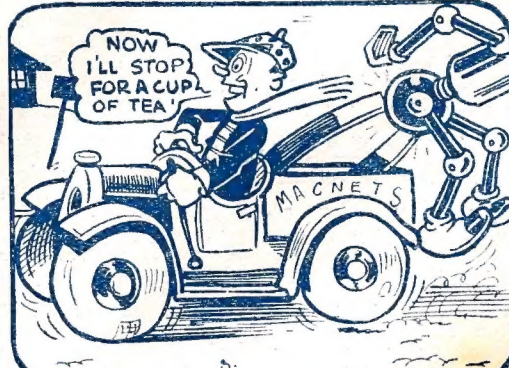
## Mac-Hinery, the



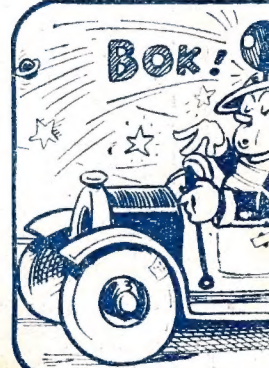
1. There's nothing old Mac likes more than a good square meal of little round nuts and a jug of oil, unless it's two square meals of the same ilk! And t'other bright morn he was having a good old tuck-in.



2. But before he could h cheap-looking chappie in a capering along behind Mac whole of his lunch. "Just



4. All at once he felt himself flying through the air, and he didn't stop until he landed on the magnet, and he stayed there till that chap pulled up for tea.



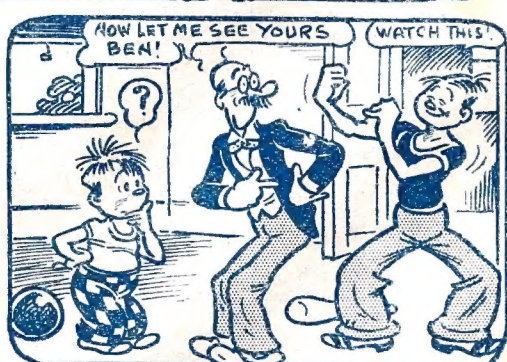
5. When he did this, pu sharply, Mac was flung ba metal headpiece cracked



# LITTLE LEN



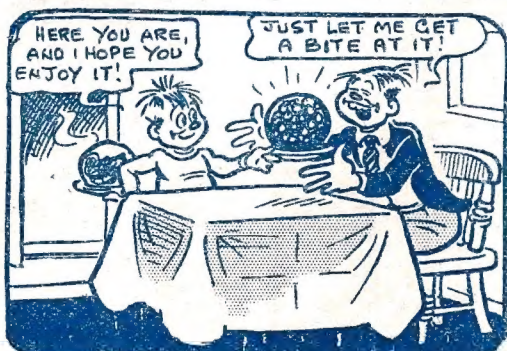
1. Little Len had raised a right arm, and Pa positively sniffed Big Ben, artfully. "Wait till you see me!"



3. Pa rather thought that Len might win, but Ben popped one half of the rubber ball on to his arm. "Len's got no muscle," he scoffed. "I've seen sparrows with bigger knee-caps. Take a look at this."



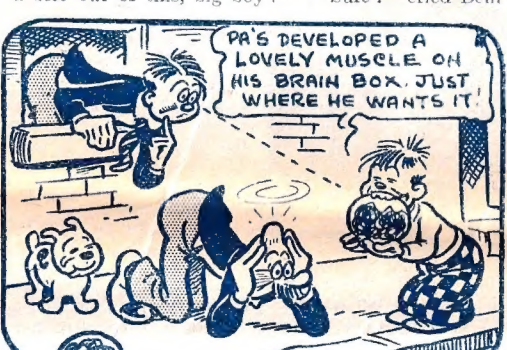
4. "It's like cast-iron!" warbled Little Len in with the pud, but tinting one end of a barbell.



6. Then in he bowled to Ben with the real pudding behind his back. "Here you are!" he grinned. "Take a bite out of this, big boy!" "Sure!" cried Ben.

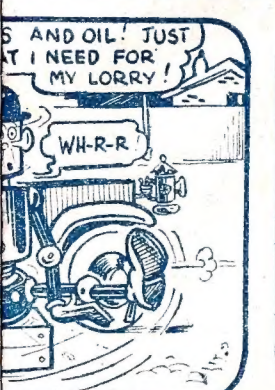


7. "It's like cast-iron!" warbled Little Len in with the pud, but tinting one end of a barbell.

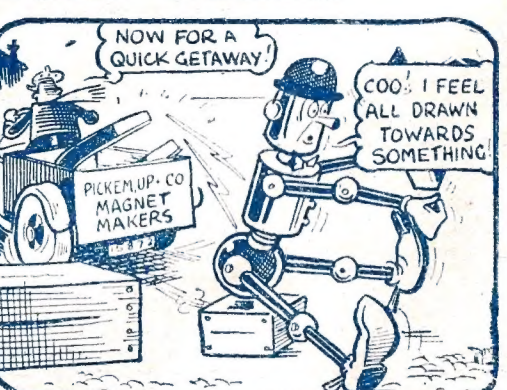


9. Which raised a fair-sized bump. "Coo! He's developed a lovely muscle on his brain box," said Len, as he tucked into the real pudding. "Good shot, Ben!"

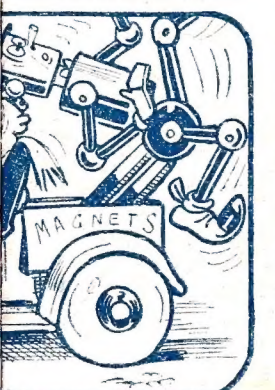
## Mechanical Man.



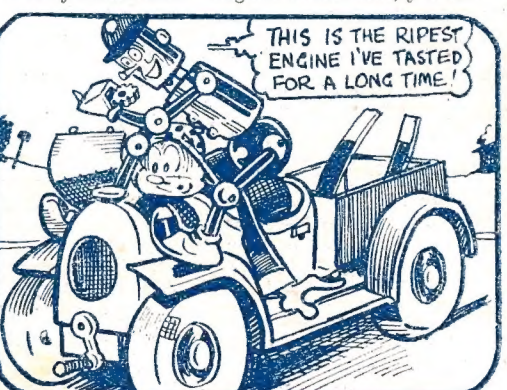
2. "Wh-r-r!" Mechanical Man said, as he collected up the nuts and oil, after which he went driving off, forgetting that he had a magnet in the lorry behind him. Magnets attract Mac, you see.



3. And the side of his lorry barged Mac out of the way as he collected up the nuts and oil, after which he went driving off, forgetting that he had a magnet in the lorry behind him. Magnets attract Mac, you see.



4. That put him out of action for a while, during which while Mac got busy with the inside of the lorry's engine. And a nice tasty time he had, too!

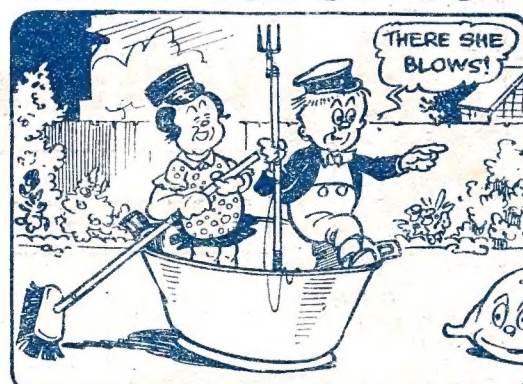


6. That put him out of action for a while, during which while Mac got busy with the inside of the lorry's engine. And a nice tasty time he had, too!

# THEY SAW IT AT THE PICTURES



1. It had been an all-stirring, all-splashing sea picture that had been showing at the Talkiedrome when Tilly and Tim went, and it introduced the prince of whales.



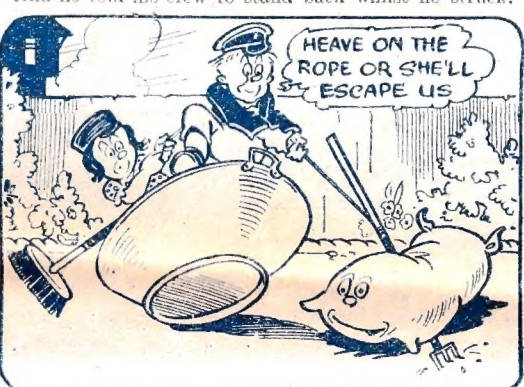
2. Dopy Mick was the name of the whale, and when our pair reached home they began their own home-made production with an old tin bath and a bolster.



3. "Whale ahoy!" yelled Tim, brandishing his harpoon, which looked rather like the toasting fork. And he told his crew to stand back whilst he struck.



4. Next moment his harpoon went flying through the air and pierced the middle of the bolster whale. "I guess that's bolstered him up all right!" Tim tooted.



5. Now came the great task of getting the whale aboard the boat, and as Tim wanted a bit of room to do this, he told Tilly to lay back. But she lay back too far.

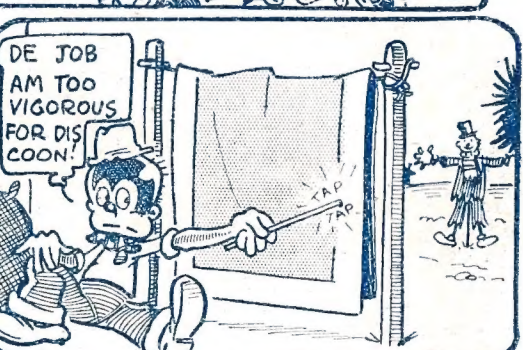


6. The result was that she began to overbalance the bath, and as Tim pulled back he completed the job, and the result was no whale for them, but wails from them!

# LAZYBONES



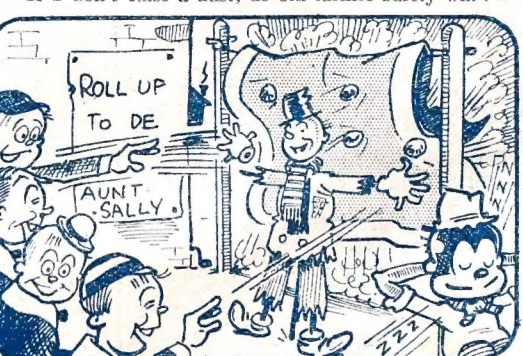
1. "De worst ob carpets am dat dey hab to be beaten!" sighed Lazybones. "And I's sure dey don't like it. I don't like being beaten myself!" But Farmer Fandangle told him to get up and get on with the job.



2. Well, after a few light taps, the coon found that the beating job had beaten him. "I s'pose I's got to do something about it, though!" he murmured. "If I don't raise a dust, de old farmer surely will!"



3. But then he felt that it was no use beating about the bush about beating about the carpet, when he didn't feel like it. And next moment a brilliant brain-wave smote him as he noticed first the sackful of spuds and second, the old scarecrow in the field.



4. All he had to do was to remove the scarecrow to the front of the carpet and write a notice for free potato shots at it. Of course, the lads of the village soon spotted this and pot-shotted the carpet. How the dust flew then—and the coon went to bye-byes! 16-2-35



Gripping Complete Mystery Tale of Peter Trayle, Detective!



# Public Defender No. 1

This Week:  
**THE BLACK CLUE.**

## A Tragedy.

THE home of Peter Trayle, England's most famous detective, was situated on the western outskirts of London.

It was a large mansion, built in modern style, overlooking at the front the main highway, and at the back the upper reaches of the River Thames.

On the river bank itself was housed a fast speedboat, ready for instant launching down its own slipway.

A garage at the side of the house held two powerful, sleek black cars, and a larger building, with sliding doors opening on to an expanse of lawn, contained an autogyro aeroplane of the latest type.

Such was the home of Peter Trayle—a place of perfect high-speed efficiency, as befitted the young man who bore the title of Public Defender No. 1.

Penton Villa was its name. Peter had called it that, because the very first criminal he had captured had gone to a grim prison of almost the same title.

At half-past two exactly in the afternoon a visitor called at Penton Villa, and was ushered in by Paddy Dawson, Peter's young assistant.

The visitor took a seat in the study. He was a man of about thirty, fair-haired, clean-shaven, and smartly dressed. The twitching of his hands betrayed the fact that he was in a highly nervous state.

"My name is Stephen Brand," began the man. "I have come to you, Mr. Trayle, on behalf of my uncle, Benjamin Morris. You know him well, I believe."

Peter Trayle nodded.

"Mr. Morris is one of my greatest friends," he smiled. "I admire him as being one of the keenest collectors of old coins in the country. Please go on."

Stephen Brand hesitated, as if unwilling to continue.

"Well, to put things briefly, I am very worried," he murmured at length. "My uncle has been behaving most strangely during the past three weeks that I have known him—"

"Just a moment!" chipped in Peter. "You say that you are a nephew of Mr. Morris, but I understood that he had no relatives."

"I am his only living relation," said Stephen Brand. "All my life I have lived in America. Until three weeks ago, when my uncle invited me to live at his house. I had never set eyes on him before. I fear that he contemplates taking his own life!"

The telephone bell rang.

Peter jumped and grabbed the instrument.

The face of the young detective was deadly serious when he put down the phone and turned to Stephen Brand.

"Your warning has come too late!" he exclaimed. "Ben Morris was found shot in his house ten minutes ago! A passing policeman heard a shot and broke in—but your uncle was dead!"

Stephen Brand staggered to his feet.

"Dead!" he gasped out. "Oh, it's horrible! To think that while I was talking to you such a thing should happen!"

"Pull yourself together, old chap," murmured Peter. "But you'd no doubt like to get back to London. We'll come with you. Paddy can drive you in your car, while I go in one of mine."

"Thanks," muttered Brand dully.

Looking dazed and almost overcome with

distress, he left Penton Villa with the detective and Paddy.

Driving a tremendously fast car, Peter quickly got ahead of Paddy and Brand, and in just under half an hour drew up outside the London house of Mr. Morris.

He was admitted at once by Inspector Hale, the divisional police chief, and he entered the library—the scene of the tragedy.

"It's a terrible but obvious affair, Trayle," said the inspector. "Mr. Morris was found sitting in that chair over here. He was shot, and still clutched a revolver in his hand."

Peter was about to ask a question, but Inspector Hale anticipated him.

"I know what you're going to ask," he said quickly. "The only finger-prints on the gun were those of the dead man. He was alone in the house, his nephew having gone out about half an hour before the shot was heard by one of my men. Ten minutes later I phoned you."

"What kind of a sound was it?" inquired Peter.

"Oh, according to the constable, it was just an ordinary pistol report, a bit muffled, of course," the inspector replied. "There can be no doubt that Mr. Morris committed suicide. He left a note which proves it absolutely."

Peter read through a short typewritten note that was handed to him. It said:

"For reasons of my own, I am ending my life. Inside the red book on the third shelf is my will. Good-bye!"

"BENJAMIN MORRIS."

The signature was, as Peter saw, written in the flowing handwriting of his old friend.

"Inside the red book was a will, as he had mentioned," said the inspector. "It seems that he left all his money to his sole surviving relative, Stephen Brand."

Paddy and Stephen Brand just then entered the room.

"Well, I'll be getting along," said the police chief, moving to the door. "Good-bye, all!"

It was plain that Stephen Brand was deeply grieved.

"Terrible! Terrible!" he repeated, in mumbled tones.

"I know just how you must feel," murmured Peter sadly. "Why not go for a walk outside? It might help you to get over it."

"I think I will," muttered Brand, hardly repressing a shudder on glancing fearfully about the room. "It's—it's been a great shock to me, although, as you know, I almost anticipated it."

With that, he left Public Defender No. 1 in the room with Paddy.

Hearing the front door close, Paddy turned to Trayle.

"Gosh—I'm sorry, guv'nor," he cried. "Mr. Morris was the last person in the world I should have expected to take his own life."

"He didn't!" Peter snapped out the words from between clenched teeth. "Benjamin Morris was murdered!"

## The Soot Clue!

FROWNING in deep thought, Peter walked slowly round the room, and at the fireplace he stopped.

"Look!" said Peter, pointing to the open hearth. "What do you make of that?"

Just in front of the fireplace grate was a

small heap of soot, freshly fallen down out of the chimney.

"Looks just like soot to me," commented Paddy. "What does it mean to you?"

"Either a lot, or just nothing!" was Trayle's cryptic remark. "I think I'll take a look upstairs, while Brand is out. His room might contain something interesting."

It was the wardrobe in Brand's room that interested Peter most. He drew a magnifying glass from his pocket and began to examine the hanging suits of clothes.

One jacket he examined for quite a while, and gave a nod of satisfaction.

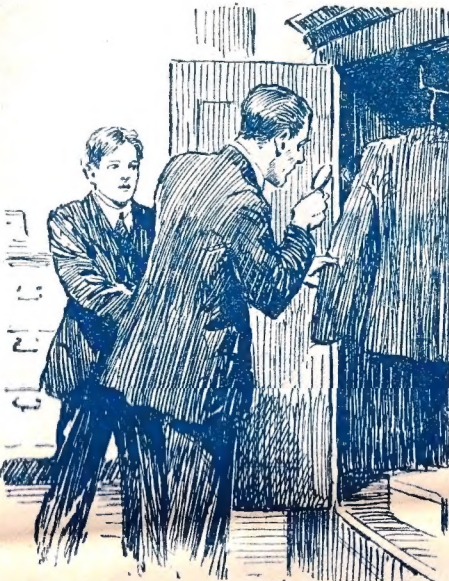
"Traces of soot on one shoulder and down a sleeve, Paddy," he remarked. "I rather fancy that Mr. Stephen Brand removed some soot from his clothes just recently."

A quick examination of a clothes-brush in the room confirmed Peter's theory, for on the tips of its bristles could be seen specks of fresh soot.

"So far, so good," muttered the young detective, and then a grim note crept into his voice. "I'm beginning to see things more clearly now, Paddy. Come on!"

Wondering exactly what fact seemed clear to his chief, Paddy followed Peter downstairs and into the library once more.

It was the fireplace which now claimed Trayle's attention. He stood in the hearth, peered keenly up the chimney, and finally pushed up his arm to its fullest extent.



One jacket Peter examined for quite a long time.

His outstretched hand touched a hard, metallic object and he nodded eagerly.

"Just what I thought," said Peter. "I know now that my suspicions of a murder having been done were correct."

He drew the object down from out of the chimney. Paddy saw what it was, and gasped in amazement.

"It surprises you, Paddy?" grinned Peter. "I thought it would. But we'll prepare a further surprise for a certain gentleman, I think."

For fully ten minutes Peter Trayle was busy in the library, and at the end of that time he took up the telephone.

The number Peter asked for was that of the police station, and he was quickly speaking to Inspector Hale.

"Hallo, inspector," he said. "I've discovered several things about the murder—"

"Murder?" interrupted the police chief. "What on earth are you talking about?"

"The murder of Mr. Morris," was Peter's quiet answer. "Will you come along at exactly five minutes to four? You will? Right—ho—and thank you, inspector."

By the time the amazed Inspector Hale reached the library of the house, Stephen Brand

had returned from his walk and was there with Peter and Paddy.

"Thanks for turning up, inspector," smiled Peter. "Now, please don't think I'm mad if what I do next surprises you. I want to ask Mr. Brand a few questions."

"Oh, carry on!" at once exclaimed Brand.

"Right!" said Peter, turning to him. "By your unfortunate uncle's death you have become a rich man. Now, if you had wanted to bring about your uncle's death—"

"I shouldn't have been visiting you, twenty miles away, when my uncle was shot!" butted in Brand.

Inspector Hale frowned.

"Look here, Trayle," he snapped, "Mr. Brand was actually with you at the time a shot was heard inside this house! How do you explain that?"

"Very simple!" Peter retorted, with a glance at his watch. "In another five seconds you will see."

But almost before Peter had finished speaking the inspector and Brand were startled by a sudden sound!

It was the noise of a muffled revolver-shot!

For a brief second, terror showed in Brand's wide-staring eyes. He whirled round and looked towards the fireplace, as a faint trickle of soot fell gently into the hearth.

He had not recovered himself, before Peter pointed an accusing finger straight at him!

"I want that man arrested for murder, inspector!" snapped Trayle.

The dead man's nephew started back, his face grey with fear. He was trembling and could not steady the twitching of his lips. His nerve left him completely.

Inspector Hale jumped to his feet and took a tight grip on the man's arm.

"Make sure of him, inspector," said Peter. "He killed Benjamin Morris and by an amazingly cunning scheme sought to make it appear as suicide. Look!"

The detective went to the fireplace and pulled out a revolver, to which was fixed a box-like attachment.

"See this?" he murmured. "It's a gun connected up with a timing device, such as is used on a time-bomb. This gun can be made to explode at any given time, by the setting of this dial. Brand shot his uncle, placed a revolver in his grasp, and then set this timed revolver up the chimney. It fired a blank cartridge, causing the muffled report heard by the constable. Brand, meanwhile, had motored quickly down to my house, thinking to establish a certain alibi."

"Gosh!" gasped the inspector. "But how about the note?"

"Forged!" replied Peter, briefly. "Brand wanted to make sure that the will would be found, at the same time making it appear that those were the last words of his uncle. When the revolver in the chimney went off, as I made it do just now, the explosion was loud and harmless, but sufficiently violent to cause some soot to fall!"

"And we found some soot on his clothes," chipped in Paddy.

Peter Trayle nodded.

"Yes, that was a vital clue," he admitted. "But not the real one that made me suspect that a murder had been committed. Brand made one great mistake!"

"What was that?" asked Paddy, and Inspector Hale together.

Peter produced the typewritten note.

"Not knowing his uncle well, Brand was unaware that he was colour-blind!" he cried. "He could not distinguish colours and could not have known that the book containing the will was a red one. In fact," he added, "Mr. Morris had a habit of always referring to his books by name. That was what made me suspicious from the start!"

And so the case against Stephen Brand was proved—but his villainy might never have been suspected, had it not been for the cleverness of Peter Trayle, Public Defender No. 1!

(Don't miss the thrilling tale of Peter Trayle in next Friday's COMIC CUTS.)

## CHIRPYCHAT



ANOTHER RECORD NUMBER OF CHORTLES.

"HALLO, Bob! Did you come by appointment?"

"No—by bus!"

"Whoa! Lend me a bit of brown paper to wrap up this pair of boots with."

"I haven't got any brown paper."

"Yes, you have. Unroll one of your cigars!"

"Cheeky chump! I suppose you think you're smart?"

"Ee, I were an awful smart lad when I were at school. Ay! On my first day at school the teacher told me to sit on a form for the present."

"Well?"

"I was still sitting there at the end of the day."

"What for?"

"For the 'present'!"

"Phew! What a trial you must have been. Which remembers me! Which would you rather be, an engine-driver, or a school-teacher?"

"I'd rather mind the train than train the mind. I guess!"

"Well said, old sock! Lend me a fiver, will you?"

"Not likely! I have to work for my living!"

"Tut, tut! Isn't it awful what some people will do for money?"

"Bah! Doesn't it worry you to owe so much money as you do?"

"No fear! Why should I worry over other people's troubles?"

"Brrr! You're a lazy loafer! Why don't you try to find a situation?"

"I'm in one now."

"You are? What kind?"

"An awkward situation, because I haven't got a situation!"

"You want to look at the advertisements in the newspaper. Don't you take in a morning paper?"

"Yes—if I'm up before my neighbour!"

"Like that, is it? Did you get up first this morning?"

"No. You see, he's been earlier of late. At first he was last, but lately he's been first, and the last time I was first the newspaper was late, so he got it first although he was last. Do you follow me?"

"Not if I can help it! But why don't you earn some money with your voice? If I was you, I would."

"Pooh! You can't sing!"

"I can! I once sang at a village concert."

"Well, that's not proof that you can sing."

"But the fact that I'm alive is!"

"Haw, haw! You'll be telling me the audience clapped their hands presently."

"So they did—over their ears!"

"Truth will out! But, I say, my barber told me he would rather shave five Scotsmen to one Englishman any day."

"Indeed! Why? Doesn't he like Englishmen?"

"Oh, yes. But he gets more for shaving five customers than he does for one!"

"Oo, leave off! By the way, we've got dozen of keys in our house, and yet not one of them will fit any of the locks."

"Then what's the use of keeping them, you chump?"

"Well, we shouldn't be able to play the piano without them!"

"Goal! Canst tell me where I can get a good cheap lunch?"

"Sure. At the Hotel de Swizzle. Good roast beef only a bob a plate."

"And what do they charge for the gravy?"

"Nothing!"

"And how much for the bread?"

"That's free, too."

"Fine! I'll go and have some bread and gravy!"

"What did you think of my play last night?"

"Not bad. But I thought the milkmaid's cheeks were much too red."

"Why? All milkmaids have red cheeks."

"Your mistook, laddie. Milkmaids are 'pail' girls!"

"Faints! Didst hear about old Billson throwing a can of benzine on the fire?"

"No. What happened to him?"

"He hasn't benzine since!"

"Have a care, sir! Are those two collie dogs yours?"

"Sure! I've named them Chips and Comic Cuts."

"What ever for?"

"Because of their splendid tails (tales)!"

"Bravo! See you next week, old knut!"



The Red Rovers Are At Their Best In This Fine Yarn.

# THE TELL TALE WATCH

Being the adventures of Terry Flanagan and Tom Armstrong of the famous Tynecastle Rovers Football Club, assisted by the comical capers of Uncle Joe, the saucy parrot, and William, the intelligent monkey.

## The Drowning Boy.

It was a snowy night in Tynecastle. Traffic churned the white flakes into slush, making the surfaces of some of the streets extra dangerous. It was very cold, and a film of ice covered the river which flowed through the city.

Along the embankment came Tom Armstrong and Terry Flanagan, hurrying to get home, and in front of them trudged a boy, his head bent, his hands in his pockets.

"Look at that poor youngster," said Tom. "Tough luck being without an overcoat on a night like this."

Suddenly a car came slithering through the slush, and went into a bad skid. Completely out of control, it shot straight at the boy, looking as if it would pin him against the embankment wall. But, just in the nick of time, the boy got his hands on to the top of the parapet, and managed to scramble up as the car crashed against the wall, the driver being uninjured.

Although out of danger now, the boy instinctively stepped back, forgetting his perilous position, and then he swayed, flinging his arms out in an effort to regain his balance, whilst Tom and Terry raced to try to help him.

But the chums were too late. The boy dropped with a crash on to the thin ice, and went plunging through, vanishing from the sight of Tom and Terry, who leant over the parapet.

Suddenly they saw the boy's arm feebly break through the ice, and in a moment they realised that either he could not swim, or else he was unable to try, perhaps owing to the shock of the icy water.

"Get a rope, Terry!" cried Tom, flinging off his overcoat, and buttoning his jacket.

Then he took a header into the open water which was caused by the breaking of the ice, and so terrific was the cold that it seemed to chill his very blood. It took all his breath away, so that he sank like a stone at first, feeling as if he were powerless.

But quickly he began to strike out, and he rose to the surface, gasping terribly, catching a glimpse of a line of people staring down at him from the embankment wall.

"There he is!" rose a shout; but Tom was so dazed that the cry sounded almost like a far-off whisper.

He did not know if the onlookers were speaking of him or the boy, but suddenly he caught a glimpse of a dark object amongst the floating fragments of ice. It was the boy, face downwards, already sinking, and, though Tom's hand seemed so cold that it had no strength in it, he managed to grip the drowning youngster's coat and turn him over.

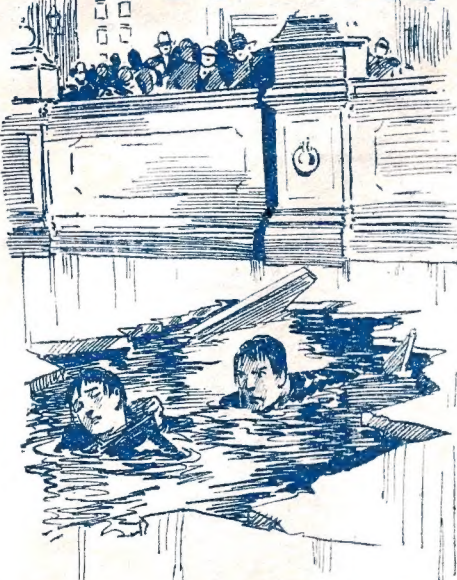
Then came the crash of a rope striking the thin ice near by, and Tom heard Terry's wild shout.

"Hang on, Tom!" Somehow the Red Rovers' skipper managed to obey, and he and the drowning boy were pulled in to some steps, amidst roars of cheers.

What happened next was more like a dream to Tom, but his senses began to come back as he felt himself being hustled into a house, where his clothes, already like boards as the water in them froze, were dragged off him.

The boy was being attended to as well, and fortunately they both made a surprisingly quick recovery, due to the fact that aid had been so near and had been given so swiftly.

Bobby Brown was the youngster's name, and he was a homeless orphan. He tried to thank Tom, but stumbled over the words, and the Rovers' skipper smilingly told him not to worry.



In spite of the intense cold Tom managed to grasp the youngster's coat.

Perhaps it was because he had saved the boy from death that made Tom feel anxious to do something more for him, and, after talking things over quickly with Terry, they decided to take him home to Mrs. Wilson's house, where they lodged.

Tom went through to the kitchen and told her what had happened, making light of his gallant deed, and her heart was touched. She took to Bobby just as quickly as Tom and Terry had done, and she offered to make up a bed for him, and she prepared more food, so that he could share the chums' supper.

Again Bobby tried to express his deep gratitude, but, though words failed him, his honest, steady eyes showed what he was feeling, and as he went upstairs he clung to Tom's hand as if he was holding on to a big brother who had come to help him.

In the chums' sitting-room were the famous mascots of the Red Rovers—Uncle Joe, the well-educated parrot, and William, the almost-human monkey.

Bobby's eyes opened wide with amazement when he saw the mascots. Quickly, however, that feeling became delight, for, of course, he thought the pair were great fun, and he made friends with them at once.

The boy went to bed soon after supper, but before he turned in he told Tom and Terry that he had been tramping for months, trying to find work.

"I've got an idea we can get him a job at the ground," said Tom, after Bobby was asleep. "I'll take him to see Mr. Falconer in the morning."

Mr. Falconer was the chairman of the Red Rovers, and he took a liking to the boy, too.

"Mind you, it is a bit of a risk, and it is very unusual to give a job to someone we know so little about, Tom," he said, "but I would like to help the poor little chap."

So a job was found for Bobby at the football ground, where he quickly became a prime favourite, for he was so willing, so cheerful, and, no matter what he was asked to do, he tackled his task with a smile.

But there was one person at the ground who did not take to Bobby, and that was a man named Watson. He had been trying to get his wages increased, though he was not worth a penny more than he was being paid, and he said he could have done Bobby's work as well as his own.

"They could have given me a rise of half what they're paying that kid," he grumbled. However, Watson's growls did not get him anywhere, and he kept his discontent to himself after a time.

Bobby and the mascots became tremendous chums, and when the merry pair were not with Tom and Terry they were generally to be found with the boy. Indeed, they were so fond of him that they showed him the way they sneaked into cinemas without paying, but he did not join them in this little game.

"You ain't got no pluck, Bob, mate," said uncle, though he did not mean it unkindly.

## The Rovers v. Portington Town.

BOBBY was looking forward very much to watching his new chums play their first home match since he had been given his job. This match was against Portington Town, and if anybody was going to yell like mad for the Rovers it was Bobby.

Indeed, so loudly did his voice ring out that Uncle Joe perched up so that he could stare into Bobby's mouth and try to find out how he did it, whilst the Tynecastle corner man thought of sending in a complaint.

And the "Ouch!" that William gave a moment later when uncle hit him was no where near as loud as Bobby's cheering.

It was a great match, between two fine sides, and played in the best sporting manner. For forty-five minutes the two teams went at it hammer and tongs, and again and again

each goal had a narrow escape, but half-time came without any score.

"E's got brass buttons on it, Billyum," said Joe, after listening to Bobby in the early part of the first half.

Then uncle stared round suspiciously, to find that his friend had vanished.

"Ere, mate," cried Joe, "Billyum's slipped off. I bet 'e's gone in to sneak some tuck!"

Knowing that a meat tea was being prepared for the two teams to enjoy after the match, Bobby thought he ought to go in search of the almost-human monkey, though he did not want to miss any more of the game than he could help.

"Let's be quick, uncle!" he said.

"Yes, mate, let's get back before we start," said Joe.

Sure enough, William was scouting round stealthily in search of tuck, and Bobby found him in a passage beyond the dressing-rooms. When he saw that he had been discovered William began to whistle carelessly, whilst he helped himself to a cigarette, and then he started to chatter. But, of course, Bobby did not understand animal talk, though Joe did.

"Don't you believe the villin, Bob boy," said uncle. "E said 'e had to go and see a gent about some nuts."

Bobby hurried the mascots to the ground, and he was just in time to see a wonderful display of passing between all five of the Tynecastle forwards. The ball went from boot to boot, none of the Portington defenders touching it, and Tom finished up with a simply colossal drive, right out of the goalie's reach.

"Goal!" yelled Bobby, almost cracking his throat in his efforts to make his voice sound above everybody else's.

"Did you say somethin', mate?" asked uncle, and got his beak punched by William for asking a silly question.

That was the only goal scored so far, and the visitors struggled with all their might and main to get an equaliser, but they just could not manage it, and the Rovers won a magnificent game by one goal to nil.

Wild with delight, Bobby went into the dressing-room with his chums, feeling ever so happy, until he suddenly heard Jack Steel's startled voice.

"Why, my notecase is missing," he said. "And so is my watch."

In a moment the other lads were examining their pockets, to find that a thief had been at work and helped himself to anything worth taking.

"I'm glad I brought my old tin watch," said Tom, who possessed a gold one, given him for scoring fifty goals in a season, but, fortunately, he had left it at home.

Of course, there was a tremendous uproar, and the club officials came hurrying to the dressing-room, and all sorts of inquiries were made. Several times Bobby thought he saw men glancing suspiciously at him, and suddenly Watson pointed at him.

"I saw that kid sneak in soon after the second half started," he said. "What was he after? That's what you get for giving a job to a young tramp you know nothing about. Come on, what do you know about it?"

Bobby's face grew white, but he managed to explain why he had gone into the building, his answer bringing a scornful laugh from Watson.

"Are you sure you didn't go into the dressing-room, my lad?" asked Mr. Falconer.

"Yes, sir!" replied the boy; and then he turned on Watson. "And I saw you go in, too, about a quarter of an hour before the game ended," he cried.

"Course you did!" snapped Watson. "I went along to see about the hot water and things like that."

"There was no need for you to do that," said the trainer.

"Well, I often do," answered the groundsman. "I went straight to the bath-rooms, had a look round, and came back. It was that boy did the job, soon after the start of the second half."

"What's this?" cried Tom at that moment, bending over some old jerseys and picking up a watch. "Why, it's my old tin one!" he said.

"I guess the thief didn't think it worth taking, and he chucked it away. And, look—look! It was going during the interval, but it has stopped—and stopped at twenty to five, when it was flung down."

"That's ten minutes before the game stopped," said Terry. "Bobby was watching the game then, because I saw him."

"And that was about the time you were in the building, Watson," Mr. Falconer said coldly.

"Well, I never went in the dressing-room, sir," muttered the man.

Meanwhile, the mascots had been trying to get gifts from the people with cars and motor-bikes, but with not much success. Presently they hopped into a motor-bike and side-car, waiting for the owner. But he did not come along, and then William pulled up a folded tarpaulin, and began to chatter excitedly.

"Alves, mate!" cried Joe, peering at the heap of watches and purses that lay under the tarpaulin.

The excited shouts of the mascots brought other people to the spot, and quickly it was discovered that the bike and side-car belonged to Watson, who was promptly handed over to the police.

"Oh, thank you!" said Bobby to the mascots, when he learnt that they had put the finishing touch to proving his innocence.

"O.K., mate!" uncle said. "Take us out and buy us one!"

(Don't forget to have some more fun and thrills with the Red Rovers in next Friday's COMIC CUTS.)



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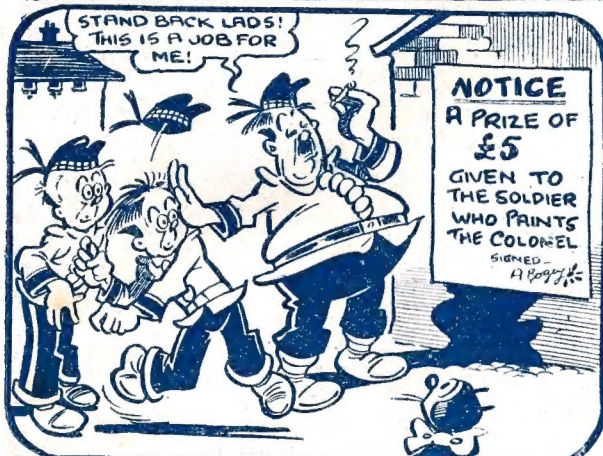
BOYS CINEMA

On Sale Tuesday, February 12th, at all Newsagents.



# PLUM AND DUFF

## THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE



1. One bright morn, a spot of glad news was posted upon a wall in the camp of the Bold Brigade. "Coo!" piped Plum, to Duff. "Look at that!" "Eyes right, you two!" sniffed Sergy Suet, coming along and presenting them with a slap or two. "Corks! A fiver to the soldier who paints the colonel!"



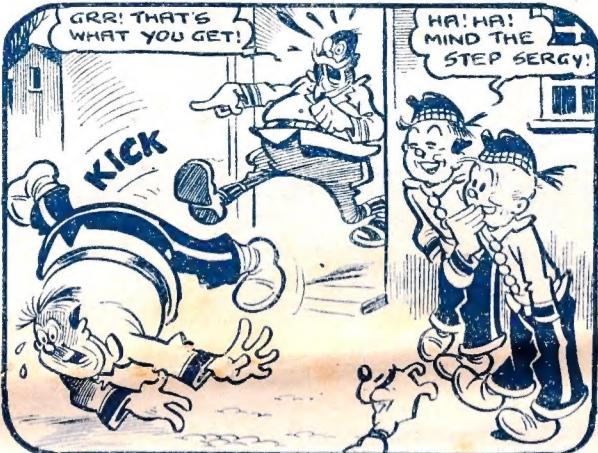
2. Sergy thought it was almost too good to be true. "Yocks!" he blithered. "I'm the man for that lark!" Saying which, he bounded into Bogey's billet with a can of paint. "Ah! There he is—bless his old side-whiskers!" he carolled. "Sleeping like a log!" "Sounds as if he's sawing it!" said Duff.



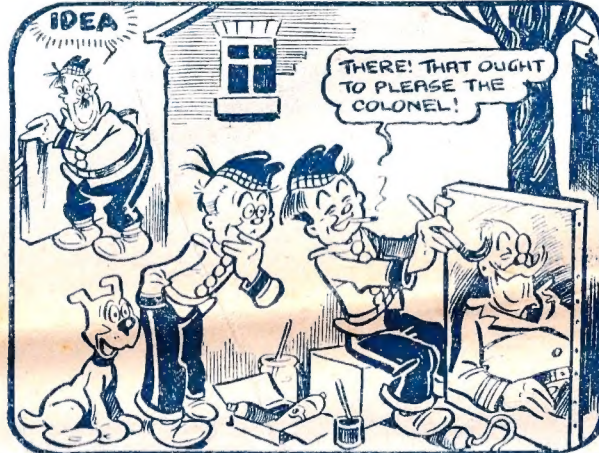
3. "Now to earn that fiver," sniggered Sergy. "Watch me, you small boys!" And he proceeded to slap the paint all over the colonel's features in truly generous fashion. "Say when, sir!" he tootled. "You should have seen the way old Bogey coloured up. 'What's all this?' he yapped, waking himself.



4. "Ah! I knew you'd be surprised, sir!" blithered old Three-stripes. "I'm a fast worker, I am. How's that, and how about that fiver?" Grinning all over his face, Sergy showed the colonel a mirror. "Don't you look nice?" he cooed.



5. "Wow! That's a personal reflection!" barked the old war-waging expert. "How dare you?" "Tee-hee! Sergy won't get a look-in now," tittered Plum, to Duff. "He'll have to look out!" And—biff! Bogey's boot removed Suet.



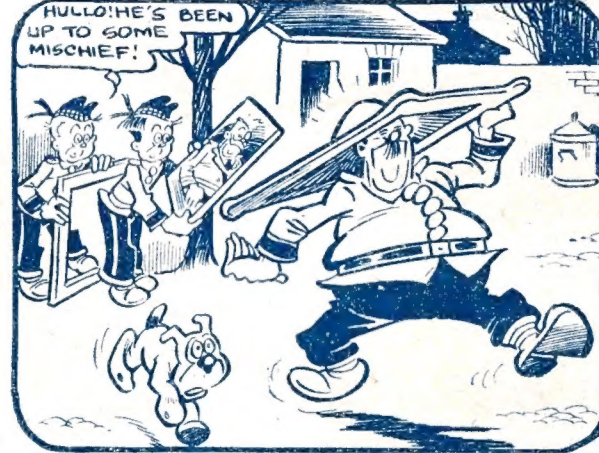
6. "Well, well!" smirked Duff. "Having been shown how not to paint the colonel, how about having a shot for that fiver?" "Brother, it's as good as in our pockets," replied Plum, as he painted a perfect portrait of the old lad.



7. "A speaking likeness," chirruped Duff. "Let's go and get a frame." But meanwhile Sergy was framing up an artful plan. "I have a pressing need for a picture, too," he grinned, artfully pressing a blank canvas on to the kid's work of art.



8. That did the trick a treat. Sergy removed the blank canvas and found an impression of the colonel upon it. "Ah! That old man can't fail to be impressed by this," thought the Suetty one to himself. "All I need now is a frame. Heigh-ho!"



9. Having secured the said frame and parked it neatly and nicely round the picture, Sergy gave himself three cheers for luck and waltzed off. "Now to find the colonel and collect the cash!" he carolled, balancing the portrait on his topknot.



10. "Ah! I've got a good head for things, I have," said old Sergy to himself, as he galloped across to where the colonel stood. "He'll think I'm a swell artist." But his head was pushing up a portion of the canvas, you see, causing it to swell up. Sergy, however, knew nix of this. "Oh, sir!" he cried.



11. "I've brought the most delightful portrait of you. There— isn't it gorgeous? And so handsome, too!" But when Bogey saw what the swelling of the canvas had done to his face, he almost swallowed his eyeglass. "Great pip and little fishes!" he gasped. "Can that be me? Do I look like that?"



12. "Exactly so, sir," purred Sergy. "What do you think of it?" "Not much, you impudent rascal!" hooted Bogey, slamming down the picture over Sergy's head. "This way for a wallowing!" But as he removed Sergy, Bogey very thoughtfully presented the kids with a fiver. Generous of him, wasn't it?





[No. 2,335.]

TEACHER TROTTER AND HIS WANDERING BOYS.

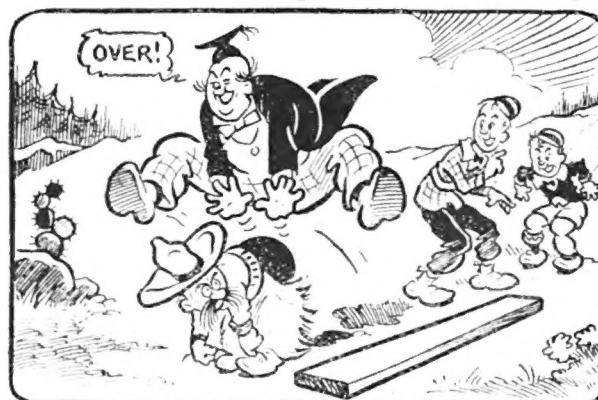
[FEBRUARY 16, 1935.]



1. Whoops! Such a merry party were Teacher Trotter and his wandering boys the other week-end. Playing leap-frog they were, and continuing their travels across the Wild and Woolly West at the same time. "Keep the pot a-boiling!" cried Tich.



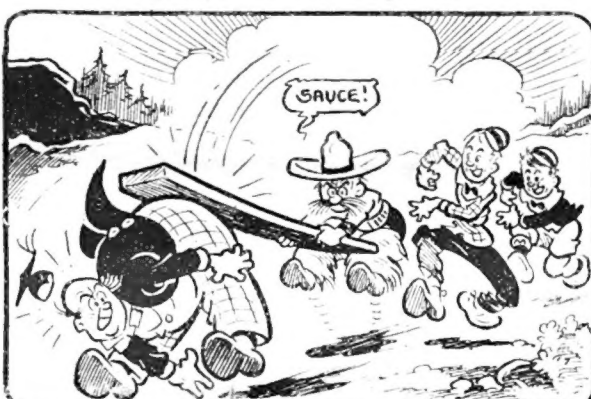
2. The Head leap-frogged over Tinker in fine style. "Ha, ha! This is the stuff!" he chortled. "I got my colours at school for this lark, when a lad." "Is that so?" tooted Tinker. "Did someone push you over and make you black and blue?"



3. But the Head had no reply for Tinker's remark. He had spotted a small bent figure in the path ahead. "Alas! That little boy wants to join in!" he chirruped. "And so he shall!" Saying which, Trotter hopped over the small bent person.



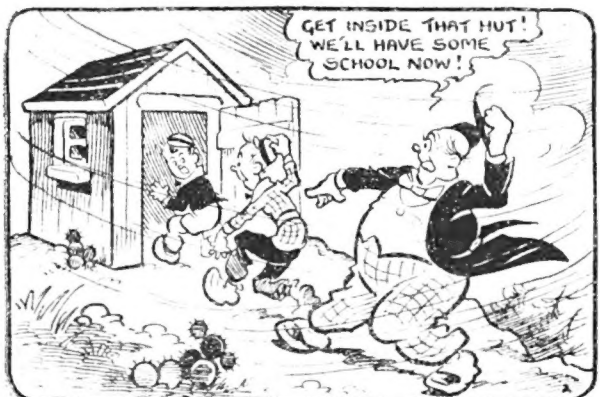
4. Then he bent down in front of him. "Come along, little man!" he cooed. "Let's see what you can do!" But that "little man" was no less than a small-sized six-shooting son-of-a-gun, who had been bending down to tie up his bootlace. "M'm!"



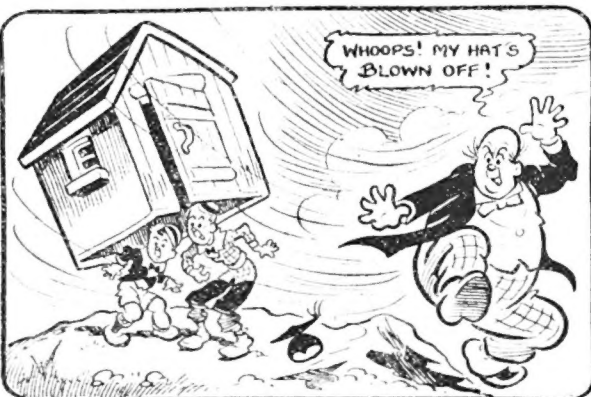
5. "Say, this guy gives me a pain in the neck!" he hooted. And picking up a stout piece of plank he applied it smartly to the back of the Head's pants—catching him bending! "He didn't want to share in the game!" smiled Tinker.



6. "But he's having his whack all right!" "Silly old fossil," snorted Midget Mike, departing quite luffy-like. "Buy him some marbles and he can get all excited!" But the Head had had enough. "No more of this leap-frog business!" he barked.



7. On they went, and Teacher Trotter spotted an empty hut. "Get inside there, you two!" he snapped, to Tinker and Tich. "We're going to have some lessons now!" "Coo!" said little Tich. "He's got the breeze up!" But so had the wind.



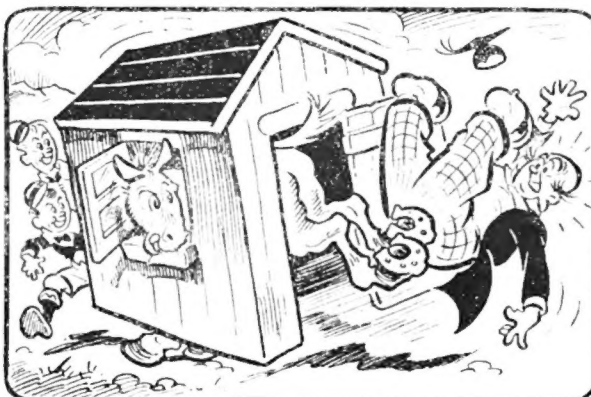
8. Along came a fierce bit of draught, and it lifted off the Head's mortar-board. "My hat!" he gasped. "Come here, hat!" But at the same moment the same spot of breeze caught up the hut and sent it skywards. "Look at it!" cried Tinker.



9. "I've heard of houses having wings, but I've never seen a shed fly before." "Oh, shed no tears, chum," quoth Tich. "It's coming down." Down dropped the shanty, but it fell over a stray and fierce-looking nag, as Trotter trapped his hat.



10. "My goodness me!" wuffed the old lump of learning, as he staggered towards the shack. "Some wind! Hark at it coming!" "Yes, the teeth of the gale must be nching!" quoth Tich, as they watched their Head open the shed door.



11. Trotter was hardly prepared for the striking reception he received. Bonk! The nag kicked, and two hard horseshoes caught the Head fairly and squarely where he wasn't expecting them. "Horseshoes aren't lucky for him!" said Tinker.



12. Trotter seemed to want to fold himself up on the ground and go by-hyes after this, so the lads didn't bother to wake him up. "We'll let him back us up instead," chortled Tinker. And the two colts-lads proceeded to play over-backs. Ha, ha!



## The Thrilling Complete Tale of a Crew of Mystery Men.

## SEAWAY ROBBERS

## The Surprise on the Ship.

**J**ACK of the Isles—otherwise Jack Steer—stood up in his motor-boat as it rose and fell over the heaving billows, and peered through the driving rain.

His eyes lit up as they beheld, some distance ahead, the outlines of an island.

"Good!" he exclaimed to himself, for he was the only one aboard. "There's Marakoa. The sooner I get there the better. It looks as if we're in for a mighty storm. Anyway, I don't suppose Dan Duggan will put out in weather like this."

That was the only comfort he had, for it was Jack's endeavour to catch Dan Duggan's schooner, the Emerald, before it left the island of Marakoa for the distant mainland.

Jack's uncle, Colonel Dering, was the Governor of the Opal Islands, of which Marakoa was one. Jack helped his uncle a great deal in his task, and to-day he had been dispatched to Marakoa to deliver an important message to the captain of the Emerald, Dan Duggan. Dan was an island trader, and to-day he was due to make the long journey to the mainland, and if he were missed it might be another week before the message could be taken.

The wind began to scream, whipping the spray off the top of the waves and sending it into Jack's face.

The rain also slashed down, making visibility very bad, and the waves rose higher every moment.

All Jack's skill was needed to keep the boat out of danger of being swamped, but every moment was precious, for it took him nearer and nearer to Marakoa.

But how close he was to it now he could not be sure, for the rain completely blotted it out. All he could go on was his compass, but suddenly he forgot all about that as an ominous sound came from the engine.

His face paled a little, for it might be that his life depended on that engine.

The engine began to splutter and miss, and the speed died down. The boat was in danger instantly. With one hand on the wheel Jack turned and lifted the engine cover.

Smack! A wave hit the side of the craft and nearly turned it over. Jack wrenched the wheel round to get her straight, just as water slapped into her, hissing over the engine.

It was impossible for Jack to examine the engine in these conditions, and even if he had been able to there was no time.

She was hurled this way and that, over the crest of one wave, then to dive down into a valley of water.

But when she rose she was broadside on to the next wave.

It struck her with smashing force, and the next instant Jack was hurled clean out, to be thrown into a cavernous scoop of green water.

The boat rolled right over, then sank like a stone.

Jack came up gasping, and struck out for his life. He just had a fighting chance to reach Marakoa, if only his strength would hold out.

Whether he was making headway or not he could not tell. But swimming was frightfully hard work, and even his big strength soon began to give out.

He was losing hope when suddenly he saw a sight that sent a thrill through him.

A schooner, heeling over with the wind, emerged out of the rain mist and came bearing down full at him!

There was scarcely time for him to get out of the way. But in that short time he recognised the ship as Captain Dan Duggan's Emerald. So Dan had started, then, even in the face of this storm.

Next moment the Emerald was sweeping past him. Some of her ropes were flying over the side.

Jack made a despairing grab at them. One snaked through his fingers, but he managed to get a grip on another.

Then, as he held on for dear life, he felt himself being dragged through the water.

He had a fleeting glimpse of men aboard watching his plight, then he pulled himself in hand over hand, grasped the rail, and clambered on to the deck.

He staggered to his feet and grasped the side.

He heard a hoarse shout, rivalling the screaming wind, then, to his amazement, he found three dark-skinned men come rushing at him.

One struck him a savage blow before he could quite realise that he was the object of an attack. Then, as he recovered himself, Jack hit out at another of his assailants and knocked him sprawling.

But just then two other men made a rush at him. One dived at his legs, and the other at his head.

Down went Jack with a crash, and already weakened by his struggle in the sea, the bump he got on the back of his head as it hit the deck dazed him.

A sallow-faced man with a thin black moustache, attired in a suit of dirty white canvas came running up to the group.

"It's Jack of the Isles!" he cried excitedly. "Tie him up—tie him to the mast!"

Rope was soon procured. It was passed round Jack's body, and he was hoisted up and placed with his back against the mast. And there he was fastened securely.

The instant that was done the men dashed



"Let me go free and I will save the ship!" cried Jack.

back to their stations, while the man in the canvas suit returned to the wheel, which had been taken over by a subordinate.

A wave dashing over the side doused Jack from head to foot and brought him round.

Very surprised he was to find himself on the deck of the Emerald, the ship belonging to his friend Dan Duggan—and a prisoner.

Where was Dan? Why was he not in charge of his own ship? And who was the man at the wheel, the man who had ordered the attack, and who was apparently in charge?

But Jack put these questions out of his mind as he gazed with alarm at the plight of the vessel. The seas were now a terrific height, and the schooner pitched and tossed and rolled so much that the men had to hold on to ropes to keep their feet.

There was a fearful crack as one of the sails tore away, fluttered in the wind like a huge flag, then broke away and was carried off by the screaming wind.

The sailors, nearly all of whom appeared to be Malays, shouted in fear and stared helplessly at the raging sea.

The rain ceased now, allowing those aboard to see ahead.

A little to the right of them the island of Karoka could be seen. Running from its extreme end was a foaming line of breakers, which marked a coral reef.

About half-way along it, and perched high on the reef, lay an old wreck.

Jack shouted with all his might, and the man at the wheel turned his head. Jack beckoned to him, for one of his arms was not tied.

Giving the wheel to one of the men, the mysterious skipper made his way nearer to Jack.

"If you want to save the ship and your lives get round to the lee of Karoka!" yelled Jack.

"I know that, but in this wind we'd never make it!" shouted the skipper.

"Dan Duggan could do it!" cried Jack.

"Where is he?"

"Where he can't give us any help!" was the answer.

"If you don't get shelter the ship'll sink!" cried Jack.

"There's a way through the reef—just one spot—get through and the ship will be saved!"

"So I've heard!" was the reply. "No one can do it. A month ago someone tried to take that ship through the reef, and look at her!"

And the skipper pointed to the wreck.

## Hemmed In.

"I'll take her through!" shouted Jack. "I know the gap. I've been through it scores of times! Get these ropes off me!"

"Let him try, boss!" shouted one of the men, who had strained his ears to listen.

"Let me go free and I will save the ship!" cried Jack. "I tell you this boat will never ride out this storm!"

"All right, then!" nodded the skipper. "Help me get the ropes off him, Marla!"

The two men set to work, but they had to hold on to the mast with their right hands while they worked with the other, or they would have been washed overboard.

The ropes fell from Jack. A lurch of the ship sent him sliding along the deck, fortunately towards the wheel. The man there bent down and grabbed him, and Jack was able to regain his feet.

"Stand aside!" yelled Jack. "I'm taking charge now to try to save your miserable skins!"

Jack stood at the wheel, gripping it hard with both hands, chin thrust forward, straining his eyes at the line of breakers.

The gap was just left of the wreck; in fact, it was just on the edge that the ship had piled up.

Gradually he moved the wheel over, and slowly the ship headed straight for the reef, apparently to its doom. She heeled over, lurched, and tossed. Big waves smashed against her side, and Jack was being almost continually doused with spray. But he clung to the wheel, his eyes on the spot where he knew the gap to be.

The roar of the waves on the reef was now

deafening. They were only fifty yards from it now. Jack clenched his teeth. Veins stood out on his forehead. Could he do it? A few yards either way and another wreck would go to join the first one.

Every man of the crew held his breath. Some yelled in excitement. Others prepared to jump overboard and chance being washed ashore.

Now the reef was almost under them. Jack waited for the crash. There was just a bumping and scraping.

The Emerald shot through the gap and was riding in comparatively calm water! And here she was sheltered by the hills of the island.

The ship was safe!

Down came what remained of the sails with a run. There was a rattle as the anchor cable ran out.

Jack turned round with a grin. But the skipper came towards him, a scowl on his face.

"You've saved the ship, yes," he said. "But how do we get out of here?"

And he swept a hand round.

YOUR EIGHT, MR. MASTERS, MAN, RETURNED JACK. "You're in a lagoon, completely hemmed in by reefs, and there's only one way out—the gap—the way we came in. I don't fancy your luck when you try to get out!"

The significance of these words was not lost on several of the crew who heard them.

They had been caught in a trap, and they knew it.

They made a rush at Jack. With his back to the wheel he met them. Two dropped with cracks to the jaw, another staggered back with a broken nose. But another dashed up with a maul-spike in his hand. He threw it, striking Jack on the temple, and he sank to his knees.

Swiftly he was bound hands and feet.

"Throw him down below!" yelled the skipper. "We'll have to take him with us now. This storm'll soon blow itself out, then we'll try to get out through the reef—and Jack of the Isles will do the steering or he'll get plugged!"

Jack was picked up by several of the men and carried down the stairs to the lower deck. He was thrown down like a sack in a passage, and back they raced to the upper deck, for much was to be done to make the ship fit for the voyage.

Jack quickly came round and looked about him. He guessed from the sounds above that the crew were busy. He found himself in the narrow passage, and close beside him was a dark recess used for storing old gear, having a door, or gate, of iron bars.

Suddenly, to Jack's amazement, he saw a hand holding a knife, emerge from between the bars!

"Hist! Don't make a noise!" came a voice from the darkness of the cavity.

With rapid movements the edge of the knife sawed away at his bonds. One by one they were severed, and finally Jack was free.

He knelt up and peered into the cavity, to see the face of a boy. He was a native, and Jack recognised him as being employed by a white planter on Marakoa.

"That you, Krimba?" he whispered. "Half a tick, and I'll try to get you out." He found the gate was fastened by a long iron bar, so fixed as to be out of reach of Krimba's short arms. In a few seconds Jack had got the gate open, and the boy sidled out.

"What's been happening on board the Emerald?" asked Jack.

"Cap'n Duggan, him load up with master's stock and much pearls also," whispered the boy. "But when Cap'n Duggan and him crew ashore Marbos and other men take ship and go away. Me on ship, so they put me here."

"Who is Marbos—the chap with the moustache?"

"Yes, master," said Krimba. "Him and other men, they come to Marakoa to help in work. They steal ship to get much valuables."

"I see," said Jack. "Look here. We're in the lagoon on Karoka. I brought the ship in here. They're going to try to make me take her out again. Now if we could only block that gap up! There's a wreck lying on the edge of the gap. I'd fill it up if it toppled over. If only we had an explosive, Krimba!"

he added.

"What these, master?" asked Krimba, stepping back into the recess and taking out an object like a round tin. "Me see master on

Marakoa use them for to blow coral up—bang!"

Jack seized the can and examined it. "Gosh, Krimba," he breathed, "you've solved the difficulty. These are time bombs, and water won't spoil them. Will you try swimming to the reef with me if we get the chance?"

"You bet, master!" grinned Krimba.

Jack put the can carefully in a side pocket. "Follow me, and be over the side like a flash, Krimba," whispered Jack.

Krimba nodded and beamed. He followed Jack along to the stairs, and they crept up them. Peeping along the deck, they saw a crowd of the men trying to get order amongst the tangled ropes.

Jack nodded. He and the boy dashed across the deck, and, clambering on to the side, they dived over, just as their flight was seen. Yells of rage burst from a dozen throats.

Jack and Krimba swam their hardest for the reef in the comparatively calm waters of the lagoon. Sharp reports mingled with the scream of the wind. Bullets zipped into the water round them, but by swimming under the surface as long as they dared they offered but poor targets.

"Let them go!" cried Marbos. "They swim to the gap, but they are mad!"

On the ocean side of the reef the waves burst with violence, but on its lagoon side it was possible to scramble on to the rocks with safety. This Jack and Krimba did. They made their way under the hull of the wreck, almost where it overhung the unseen gap below water.

Jack explored the reef at that spot, and then found what he wanted, a deep hollow. He thrust the bomb into it, having first timed it to go off in five minutes' time.

"All ready, Krimba!" he cried.

Along the lagoon side of the reef they scrambled as fast as they could go. They had almost reached the palm-fringed beach when there came a terrific explosion. A fountain of water and pieces of rock flew into the air from almost under the wreck.

The old ship rocked, then tilted over and plunged into the water with a mighty splash.

Then it came to rest, half its bulk visible, the other half completely filling the gap.

The ship-robbers were trapped! They could be seen dancing with rage on the deck of the Emerald. Presently they lowered two boats.

"They're going to get us if they can," murmured Jack. "But with help from Marbos and his men, we'll be able to get them!"

As Jack and Krimba stepped towards a friendly native tribe, Jack's keen ears detected the sharp crack of a snapping twig, and, advancing cautiously, he presently made out the forms of Marbos and his men who were searching the forest for him.

Marbos must have guessed Jack would make for the village, and found a short cut to intercept him.

The rogues were well spread out so as to thoroughly comb the woods, and it would have meant a considerable detour to safely pass them, but Jack had a better plan.

Climbing a tree close by, he beckoned Krimba to do the same, and then, working his way along a branch, Jack leapt to the next tree, and from there to the next, and so on.

And thus the two of them passed right over Marbos, who never for a moment thought of looking in the tree-tops for his victims.

Presently Jack thought it safe to get down.

Jack led the way in amongst the trees and to the village of a friendly native tribe about a mile inland. Enlisting their help, the robbers were soon surrounded and overpowered.

"When the storm goes down we'll blow that old wreck out of the gap, and the Emerald will sail back with her captain aboard," said Jack.

"The natives here will soon send a smoke message across. And you'll get a fine reward for what you've done, Krimba."

And Jack was right.

THE END.

(Starts next week: "The Lone Outlaw.")



DEAR COMIC CUTLETS.—Good! I've got a little corner to myself this week, but, phew!—what with all the good things in this number, it's a bit of a squeeze, as the Brazil said to the nutcrackers.

I've got a special titbit of news for you. I dare say you are all sorry that the adventures of Jack of the Isles comes to an end this week, but I can promise you a yarn to equal it in thrills to take its place. It will be called

## THE LONE OUTLAW

and it is a stirring tale of Red Indians and mystery in the Wild West. Make a point of starting this grand new story from the very first chapters, which appear next week.

Don't forget to order your Comic Cuts to be saved for you regularly every Friday. It's too good to miss.

Cheerio, till next Friday.

CLARENCE CUTS.

16-2-35





Nick Waller has been sent to Blackmoor School by a strange benefactor. Many mysterious happenings occur, and the school is visited by a queer Chinaman. One day Nick rescues the Chinaman from a railway track.

### The Hunted Man.

**"LI SING!"** Nick Waller uttered the name in astonishment as he stared at the face of the man they had rescued from the peril of the railway points.

"You!" he gasped. He could hardly believe it. The professor's Chinese servant was the last person in the world Nick had expected to meet amid the wild moorland country of Devon.

"Whatever brings you here?" he asked. The Chinaman stared back at him with expressionless eyes, and now that the danger was past his face was like a mask.

"I am grateful to you and your friend for helping me," he said, still breathing heavily. "It was kind of you, and I shall not soon forget."

"Yes, but—"  
"It would be better if you asked nothing," Li Sing interrupted significantly. And there was a most awkward pause.

"D'you mean to say you two know each other?" McCowan asked in surprise; and Nick nodded—aware that he was blushing furiously. "Yes," he said. "This is Li Sing, and he—"

But again Nick broke off. He felt something pointed against his ribs, and, looking down, quickly stiffened. The Chinaman was pressing a dagger against his coat, and even in the dusk there was no mistaking the Oriental design. It was an exact replica of the dagger which had startled the school by crashing through the study window a few nights ago!

"So this is the explanation of the mysterious Chinaman who's been hanging round the school," Nick thought. "It was Li Sing! He hurled that dagger! His was the face old Gibbs, the porter, saw in the quad that night!"

Why? What did it mean? For what reason was the professor's servant shadowing the school like this?

Nick bit his lip to keep back the many questions he wanted to ask. And that little gesture in itself brought to him another baffling query: Why must he not ask questions? Why was there so much mystery?

He stared at Li Sing blankly, and, unblinkingly, those narrow, inscrutable eyes stared back. "Remember," said the Chinaman softly. "Be careful what you say!"

And without another word he turned abruptly and walked away into the gloom. They watched him climb over the wooden fence at the side of the railway track and disappear into the trees.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" McCowan muttered. "That's a queer chap if you like! And you say you know him?"

"I met him at my guardian's office in London," Nick answered. He was glad McCowan had not seen the incident of the dagger, but Nick was aware of his friend's puzzled scrutiny, and went redder than ever.

"He must think quite a lot of you to talk about you in his sleep," the Scottish junior said.

"What do you mean?" Nick demanded, and McCowan gave a shrug.

"Didn't you notice how he was dressed? That long black coat and the hat pulled down over his eyes? That's how old Joby Darrel said his lodger was dressed!"

"You mean—"

"I bet you anything," McCowan declared, "that Chink's the mysterious Mr. Brown."

And Nick could only wonder afresh. Was the Scottish junior right?

He was looking at Nick harder than ever. "You know," he said slowly, "I'm beginning to think that you and this Chinese business and old Joby's lodger are somehow all linked together."

"Oh, rot!" Nick retorted, trying to laugh it off.

But McCowan was persistent. "It's true," he nodded. "And there's certainly some mystery about you. I wonder what it is?"

"I—I think we'd better be getting back to the school," Nick muttered, turning away hastily. "We're no end late for call-over already."

But they were destined to be later still, for a fog was rolling in from the sea. It enveloped them like a dense white cloud, and soon they were finding it difficult to keep to the moorland path.

"Oh, blow this!" McCowan exclaimed. "We look like getting lost if we're not careful!"

They pushed on slowly, shoulder to shoulder, their coat collars turned up, their hands thrust deep into their pockets; and then suddenly they heard a sound which made them stop dead.

"What on earth was that?" Nick gasped.

"Sounded like a gun to me," McCowan retorted. "Listen!"

They stood still, looking about them. In the silence of the wintry twilight they could hear voices—an agitated, far-off cry of "This way—quick!" And then an answering "Right—ho!" that was near at hand.

"Sounds like a bit of bother somewhere," McCowan said. "I'm sure that was a gun, aren't you? And, hark—"

He broke off at the sound of running feet, and they swung round to see a dark form come racing towards them out of the mist.

"My hat! A prison warder!" McCowan exclaimed, recognising the uniform and the gun the man was carrying.

"Don't move!" he cried harshly, and the next instant the two boys were blinking in the dazzling beam of the torch the man flashed in their faces.

"Huh! Schoolboys, eh?" he grunted in disappointed tones. "What the blazes are you doing out here?"

"We're trying to grope our way back to Blackmoor School," the Scottish junior grinned. "Any objections?"

"No; but I don't want none of your sance. And you'd better get a move on," the man said warningly. "It isn't safe for schoolboys on the moor to-night."

"Why? What's wrong?" Nick asked. "We thought we heard a shot—"

And the warder nodded. "I expect you did," he said. "There's a convict escaped from the prison."

"Gee whizz!" gasped Nick.

"Got away early this afternoon. Cleverest getaway in years, too. Somebody helped him from outside, of course—and they couldn't have picked a better day for it. We've been combing the moor for hours, and we think he's come this way. One o' my mates thought he spotted him a few minutes ago, dodgin' through some bushes—that's when you heard the gun. I suppose you kids have seen nothing of him?" he asked. "Smallish man—little



"Don't move!" the warder said harshly as the two boys stood blinking in the torchlight.

finger of his left hand missin'. Called the Snake because of the way he can worm himself out of tight corners."

The chums had to admit that they had not had the thrill of meeting such a remarkable gentleman, and with a further warning the warder went on his way.

"Poor chap—I don't envy any convict trying to get away on a night like this," Nick said, with a shudder, as they went groping on through the fog.

But they saw no sign of the hunted man, and eventually they reached the school without further incident.

"Report at once to Mr. Radley!" old Gibbs, the porter, grunted as he came to unlock the gates for them.

"There's a convict at large, Gibbo!" McCowan grinned excitedly.

"Ay, and it looks to me as if he's had a bosh at one o' you!" retorted the old soldier, with a shrewd glance at the bandage round Nick's head.

Mr. Radley, the Housemaster, when they reported their belated return in his study, wanted to know all about that bandage.

"I slipped on the cliffs and banged my head against a piece of rock, sir," Nick explained,

with perfect if not complete truth, and doing his best not to betray Jeff Macey's bullying interference.

And, satisfied that the injury was not serious, the Housemaster nodded.

"You were not present at call-over, so, of course, you did not hear the headmaster's order that until further notice the entire school is gated," Mr. Radley said.

"On account of the convict, sir?" McCowan asked, and Mr. Radley's eyebrows went up.

"You know already, then?" he exclaimed. "We were stopped by a warder," Nick explained.

"They will soon get him, of course," Mr. Radley said. "In a few hours I expect the unfortunate fellow will be back in his cell again."

But when the last light in the school went out that night the hunted man was still at large.

### The Haunted Cave.

**T**HE next morning there were two letters in the rack for Nick.

He recognised the professor's handwriting on the envelope of one, and was glad that he had taken it into the quiet of the library to read, for it was a very disturbing letter.

"I want you to do another little service for me, Nick," his guardian wrote. "It is quite simple, but I must ask you to maintain the strictest secrecy and care over it. As you probably know, near the school there is a certain part of the shore called Brigands' Gap, where I believe in the olden days smugglers used to land with their contraband. To the left of this gap there is a cave which is reputed—foolishly, of course—to be haunted. Well, I want you to pay a visit to this cave at midnight on the day you receive this letter. In the cave you will meet a friend of mine. I want you to lead this man to the crypt under the White Chapel. That is all. But you must take nothing with you except your pocket torch, and be certain not to use it until you are well inside the cave. Absolute care and secrecy are essential. You understand?"

And the letter was signed: "Your affectionate guardian, Professor N."

Nick read the letter with a growing sense of dismay. He looked round with a guilty start—as if fearful lest the very books on the shelves of this old library had eyes to spy upon the secret information that astonishing letter contained.

The why or wherefore of it Nick couldn't understand. Nor why it was necessary to meet this friend of the professor at midnight in a cave upon the seashore and lead him to the crypt under the White Chapel.

Why? For what purpose? The professor had given him no reason for performing these mysterious services. All Nick had been told was that in return for sending him to this school he would be expected to perform certain small duties from time to time—little commands which he must obey "without question!"

That had been the bargain. And Nick had agreed, promised to do all, anything the professor asked of him. He had not dreamt at the time that those "certain small services" would be anything like this!

The first had been bad enough—and puzzling, too—and only by the merest chance had it avoided ending in disaster. But this was surely asking too much. Breaking bounds after light-out when the school was gated! If he were discovered it would mean expulsion and disgrace.

Didn't the professor realise that? Dully and mechanically Nick opened the other letter. It was from Sheila, his sister, writing from "Sunshine Convalescent Home, San Morica" in the South of France.

It was such a happy letter—with a lightness and a joy Sheila had never before known. She said how lovely it all was—how much stronger she was getting day by day. And she finished with:

"Oh, Nick, how good it is of the professor to do all this for me!"

And as Nick read that he suddenly knew how right she was. He felt mean and paltry for the resentful thoughts he had cherished. Of course, it was good of the professor. He had taken them both out of poverty and given them happiness and comfort. Above all, he was giving Sheila a new health and strength. And for her sake, then, Nick must do everything the professor asked—no matter how hard it was, how mystifying, how dangerous.

Folding the letters, he stuffed them carefully away in his pocket. But all through the day he thought of the task that was before him. He wanted to confide in McCowan, but he knew he dare not. For the second time during his short life at Blackmoor he was to break bounds, and he hoped this time he would be more successful than the last.

The night was frosty, and the moon was high. At half-past eleven there was a faint creak in the Fourth Form dormitory as Nick slipped carefully out of bed.

He listened a moment to the measured breathing from the sleeping boys, and decided that he was safe to dress.

Then, shoes in hand, he crept cautiously out of the dormitory and down the stairs to his study, where he put on his overcoat and wrapped a woollen scarf round his throat.

The school was dark and still as he escaped out into the quadrangle through a side door on the ground floor—and there the bitter cold of the wintry night struck him. He climbed over the school wall, and, dropping into the lane beyond, stood still, listening and shivering.

Not a sound. Not a stir. Only the moon-

light, cold and clear, turning the world to silver and shadow.

He thought of the escaped convict, and his heart beat fast. He could imagine every bush and tree held that lurking fugitive. Stealing his nerves, Nick hurried on his way, and was half-way across the moorland path to the cliffs when out of the shadow of a little group of spruces ahead a figure stepped.

"Just a minute," said a voice; and Nick caught his breath.

It was the warder who stopped them in the fog!

Nick didn't stop to think. In a flash he had whipped off his cap and thrust that incriminating piece of evidence into his coat pocket. Then, turning quickly, he ran for all he was worth.

He heard the warder shout "Stop!" behind him, and expected every second to feel a bullet whiz past his head. But, throwing caution to



"Is—is anybody there?" Dick cried. The deadly silence unnerved him.

the wind, his only thought was to escape without being questioned and recognised.

A quick glance over his shoulder told Nick that the warder was in pursuit. Nick ran till he thought his lungs would burst with the effort and his legs give way under him—and it was only by twisting this way and that through the shadows that he at last managed to put the man off the trail.

He reached the spot where the cliffs were low and a winding path sloped down to Brigands' Gap. He was hot and breathless, but he dare not pause. He ran down the crunching shingle to the beach—and who knew but what here, too, the rocks held those watching men? But it was a risk he had to take, and all he could do was trust to luck.

The tide was in and murmured at his feet. Across the water the moon was painting a silvery pathway. But Nick had no time for such things then; his eyes were searching the tiny bay for the entrance to the haunted cave.

He found it at length at the far end of the Gap—a narrow opening in the cliff that was difficult to see until one was almost upon it.

And very cautiously he made his approach.

His heart was beating faster than ever. He stood in the darkness of the opening, a lonely figure amid the mystery of the night. He thought of the tales he had heard about this cave—the phantom buccaner whose legend made it a place for all but the bravest to avoid. And then he thought of the professor's friend, who must be waiting somewhere within.

It was all so terribly quiet—each crunching step he took unnerved him. He took out his torch and flashed the white beam of light around.

"Is—is anybody there?" he said.

There was no answer—only the eerie echo of his own voice. And when he was deciding that the "friend" whoever he was, was gone, Nick heard the faint sound of a movement somewhere near.

He swung round quickly, flashing the torch.

"Where are you?" he asked.

The reply was a laugh—a cackling, fiendish laugh that chilled him through.

It came from above, and, jerking the torch up, he nearly dropped it. For there, glaring down at him in the circle of light, was a face—a horrible, grinning face, white as no living face could be.

Just for a moment it hovered above him, then with a rush it seemed to sweep down upon him, and two powerful hands gripped Nick by the throat.

(What is the reason for this sudden attack? Read more of this exciting tale in next Friday's COMIC CUTS.)

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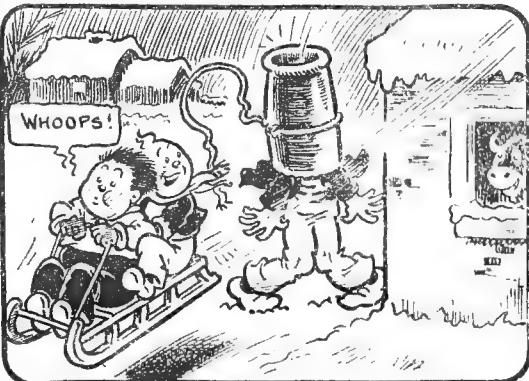
# THE TWINS & THEIR UNCLE TOM



1. Jack and Sam were having great fun with their little sledge, but Uncle Tom soon found it rather upsetting. And he was most annoyed with them about it!



3. "Here we go!" gurgled Jack, as they sped down the snowy slipway. But next moment he spied Tom coming along below. "Quick, brakes, Sammy!" he cried.



5. That chimney was not used to being tugged like that, and it came rolling after the sledge. And as the twins whizzed off the roof it dropped—plop!—on Tom.



2. He said that if he caught them in the yard again, well they'd catch it! So they took themselves and the sledge up to the roof, right out of uncle's way.



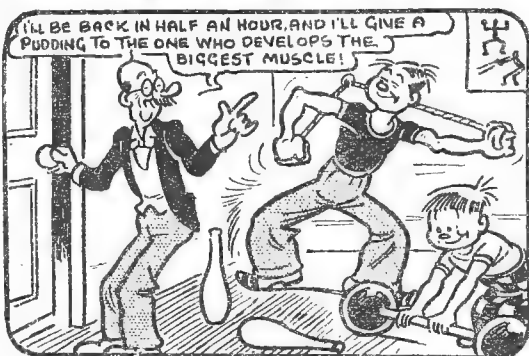
4. And very promptly his twin sent their rope over the chimney. "That's stopped us from going too far!" slipped Sammy. But that's where he was wrong.



6. "Good-ho!" gurgled Sammy. "That's put him out of action!" And he had to wait for Fairy to release him, whilst the twins sledged around the yard!

## KING OF COMICS

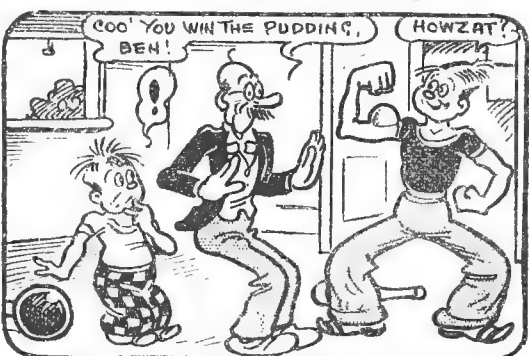
# BIG BEN AND LEN



1. Big Ben and his little brother Len managed to raise a spot of enthusiasm for Pa's muscle-raising contest. "Don't forget, boys," burred the old lad, "the one who has the biggest muscle gets a pudding!"



2. Half an hour later a small lump on his strong-cooked with glee. "Pooh, cutting a rubber ball in half!"



4. "My, oh my!" guffed Pa, in great astonishment, when he saw the size of Ben's "muscle." "That certainly wins the pudding, lad! What a whopper!"



5. "Oh, that's only a p..." Ben. Pa promised to send the little lad got busy pa...



7. "The best things to put in puddings are teeth, any old day!" Saying which, the big boy took a hefty bite, and then wished that he hadn't! "M'yes!"

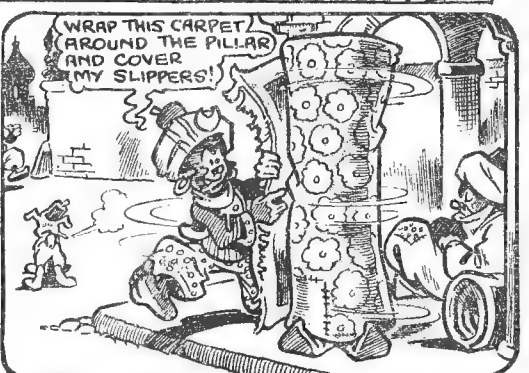


8. "Ow!" he yowled and he cast that painted window, catching Pa a lov...

# TOMATO KHAN THE PERKY PERSIAN



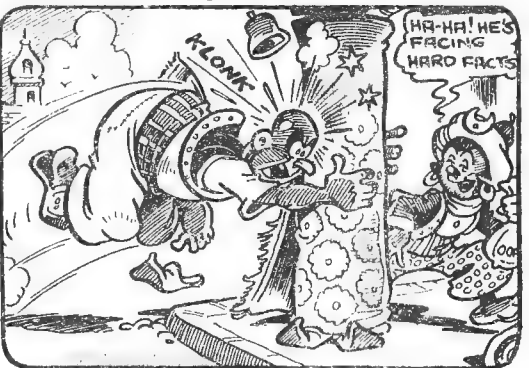
1. Our perky little Persian was just stepping home with his week's wages when Aloumi, a nasty bit of bully work, spotted him and the wages, too! "Verily, there is nothing easier than helping thyself," he chirped.



2. "Not if I can help it!" tootled Tomato, in posh Persian. And he made quick tracks to get out of Aloumi's way, and ere he had gone very far he spied a vendor of Persian carpets slumbering by the roadway.

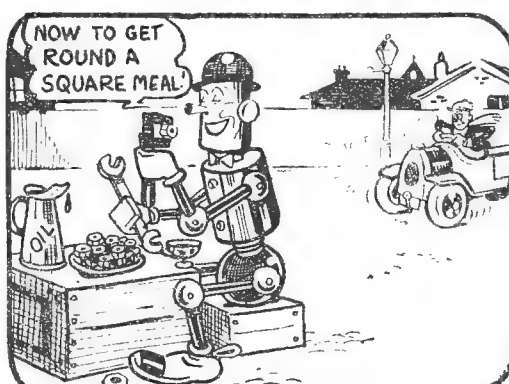


3. "That looks like the solution to my little problem!" our laddie laughed. And removing his footwear, he placed them so that they just peeped out from beneath a long roll of carpet. "He's in that!" hissed Aloumi.



4. And he charged full pelt at the carpet, hoping to barge Tomato Khan right over and collect his cash. But all he collected was a dent in the dome, 'cos Persian rugs are hard. And Tomato just ha, ha-ed!

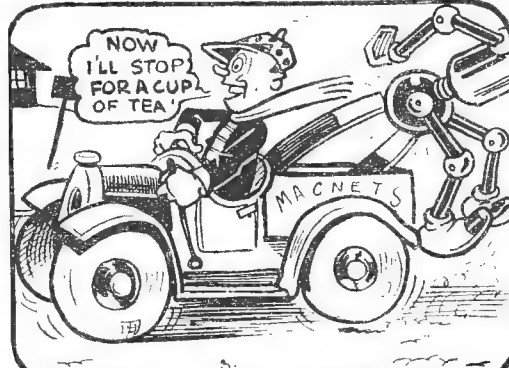
# Mac-Hinery, the



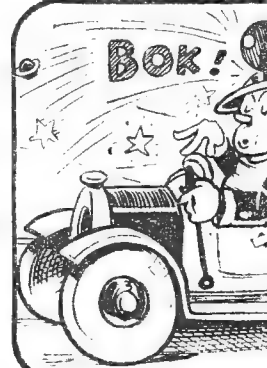
1. There's nothing old Mac likes more than a good square meal of little round nuts and a jug of oil, unless it's two square meals of the same ilk! And t'other bright morn he was having a good old tuck-in.



2. But before he could l... cheap-looking chappie in a capering along behind Mac... whole of his lunch. "Just..."



4. All at once he felt himself flying through the air, and he didn't stop until he landed on the magnet, and he stayed there till that chap pulled up for tea.



5. When he did this, pu... sharply, Mac was flung ba... metal headpiece cracked



-CROWNS THE LOT!

# LITTLE LEN



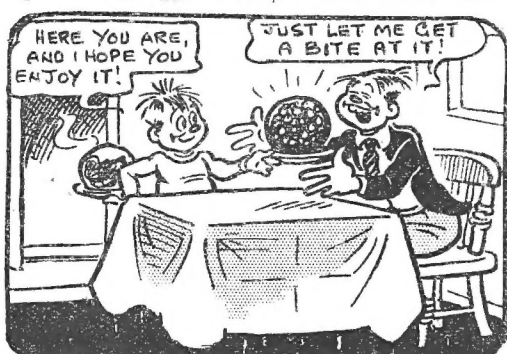
1. Little Len had raised a right arm, and Pa positively sniffed Big Ben, artfully. "Wait till you see me!"



3. Pa rather thought that Len might win, but Ben popped one half of the rubber ball on to his arm. "Len's got no muscle," he scoffed. "I've seen sparrows with bigger knee-caps. Take a look at this."



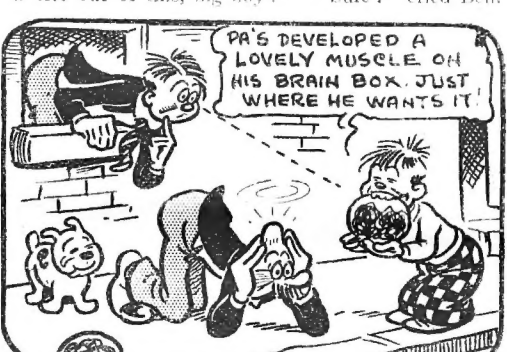
4. "It's like cast-iron!" warbled Len in with the pud, but inting one end of a barbell.



6. Then in he bowled to Ben with the real pudding behind his back. "Here you are!" he grinned. "Take a bite out of this, big boy!" "Sure!" cried Ben.



7. "It's like yourself boiled!" warbled Len in with the pud, but inting one end of a barbell.

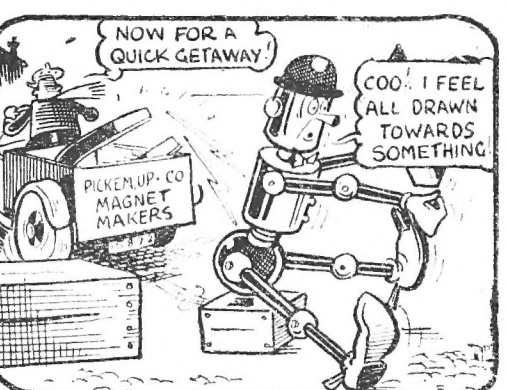


9. Which raised a fair-sized bump. "Cool! He's developed a lovely muscle on his brain box," said Len, as he tucked into the real pudding. "Good shot, Ben!"

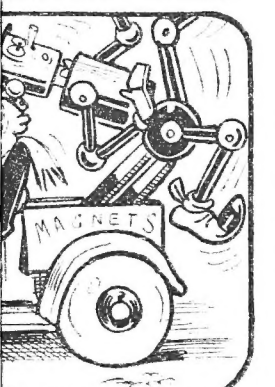
## Mechanical Man.



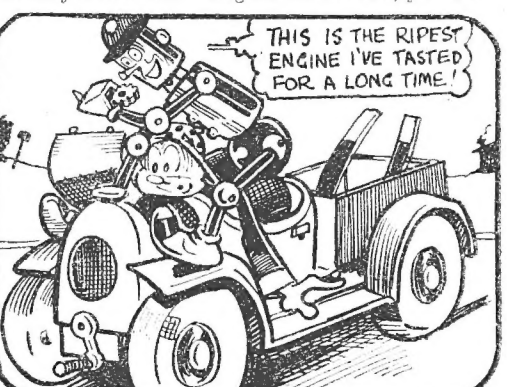
2. Bolt even one of the nuts, a cheaper-looking car came and helped himself to the what I want!" he hawed.



3. And the side of his lorry barged Mac out of the way as he collected up the nuts and oil, after which he went driving off, forgetting that he had a magnet in the lorry behind him. Magnets attract Mac, you see.



4. That put him out of action for a while, during which while Mac got busy with the inside of the lorry's engine. And a nice tasty time he had, too!

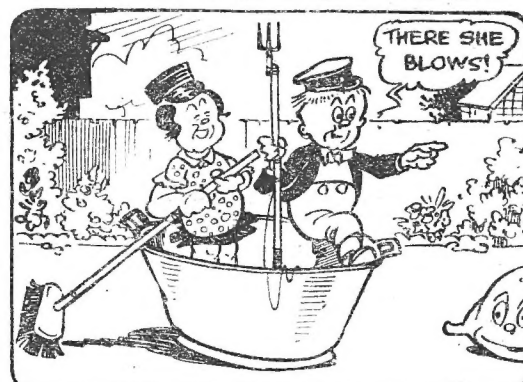


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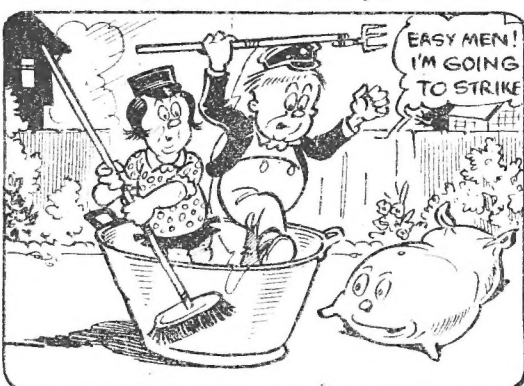
# THEY SAW IT AT THE PICTURES



1. It had been an all-stirring, all-splashing sea picture that had been showing at the Talkiedrome when Tilly and Tim went, and it introduced the prince of whales.



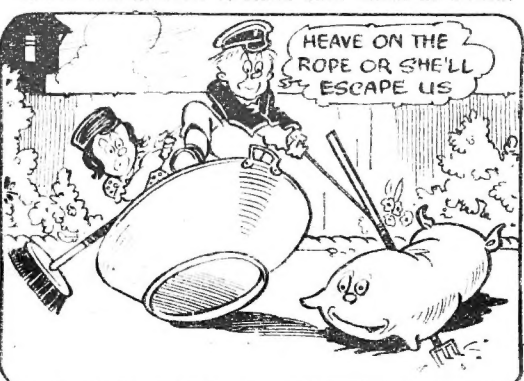
2. Dopy Mick was the name of the whale, and when our pair reached home they began their own home-made production with an old tin bath and a bolster.



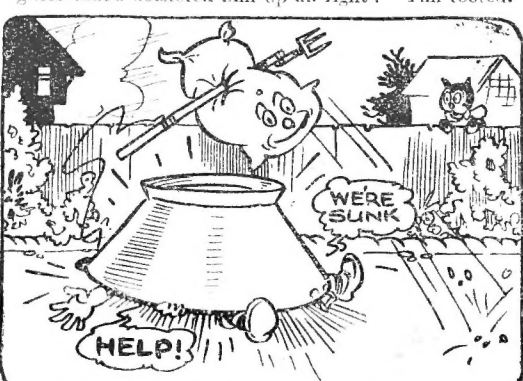
3. "Whale about?" yelled Tim, brandishing his harpoon, which looked rather like the toasting fork. And he told his crew to stand back whilst he struck.



4. Next moment his harpoon went flying through the air and pierced the middle of the bolster whale. "I guess that's bolstered him up all right!" Tim tooted.



5. Now came the great task of getting the whale aboard the boat, and as Tim wanted a bit of room to do this, he told Tilly to lay back. But she lay back too far.

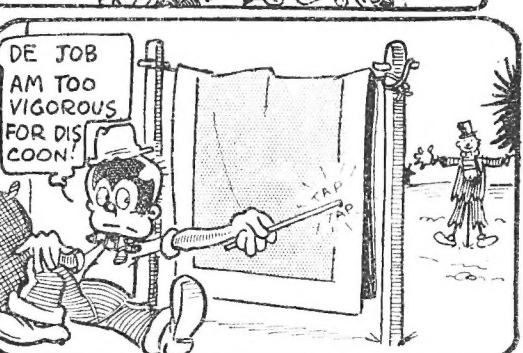


6. The result was that she began to overbalance the bath, and as Tim pulled back he completed the job, and the result was no whale for them, but wails from them!

# LAZYBONES



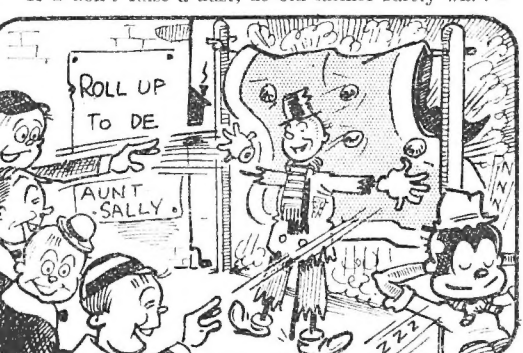
1. "Do worst ob carpets am dat dey hab to be beaten!" sighed Lazybones. "And I s'pose dey don't like it. I don't like being beaten myself!" But Farmer Fandangle told him to get up and get on with the job.



2. Well, after a few light taps, the coon found that the beating job had beaten him. "I s'pose I s'got to do something about it, though!" he murmured. "If I don't raise a dust, de old farmer surely will!"



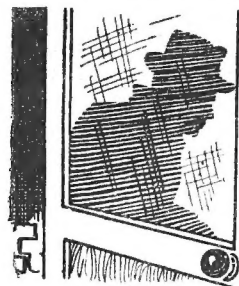
3. But then he felt that it was no use beating about the bush about beating about the carpet, when he didn't feel like it. And next moment a brilliant brain-wave smote him as he noticed first the sackful of spuds and second, the old scarecrow in the field.



4. All he had to do was to remove the scarecrow to the front of the carpet and write a notice for free potato shots at it. Of course, the lads of the village soon spotted this and pot-shotted the carpet. How the dust flew then--and the coon went to bye-byes! 16-2-35



Gripping Complete Mystery Tale of Peter Trayle, Detective!



# Public Defender No. 1

This Week:  
**THE BLACK CLUE.**

## A Tragedy.

THE home of Peter Trayle, England's most famous detective, was situated on the western outskirts of London.

It was a large mansion, built in modern style, overlooking at the front the main highway, and at the back the upper reaches of the River Thames.

On the river bank itself was housed a fast speedboat, ready for instant launching down its own slipway.

A garage at the side of the house held two powerful, sleek black cars, and a larger building, with sliding doors opening on to an expanse of lawn, contained an autogyro aeroplane of the latest type.

Such was the home of Peter Trayle—a place of perfect high-speed efficiency, as befitted the young man who bore the title of Public Defender No. 1.

Penton Villa was its name. Peter had called it that, because the very first criminal he had captured had gone to a grim prison of almost the same title.

At half-past two exactly in the afternoon a visitor called at Penton Villa, and was ushered in by Paddy Dawson, Peter's young assistant.

The visitor took a seat in the study. He was a man of about thirty, fair-haired, clean-shaven, and smartly dressed. The twitching of his hands betrayed the fact that he was in a highly nervous state.

"My name is Stephen Brand," began the man. "I have come to you, Mr. Trayle, on behalf of my uncle, Benjamin Morris. You know him well, I believe."

Peter Trayle nodded.

"Mr. Morris is one of my greatest friends," he smiled. "I admire him as being one of the keenest collectors of old coins in the country. Please go on."

Stephen Brand hesitated, as if unwilling to continue.

"Well, to put things briefly, I am very worried," he murmured at length. "My uncle has been behaving most strangely during the past three weeks that I have known him—"

"Just a moment!" chimed in Peter. "You say that you are a nephew of Mr. Morris, but I understood that he had no relatives."

"I am his only living relation," said Stephen Brand. "All my life I have lived in America. Until three weeks ago, when my uncle invited me to live at his house. I had never set eyes on him before. I fear that he contemplates taking his own life!"

The telephone bell rang.

Peter jumped and grabbed the instrument.

The face of the young detective was deadly serious when he put down the phone and turned to Stephen Brand.

"Your warning has come too late!" he exclaimed. "Ben Morris was found shot in his house ten minutes ago! A passing policeman heard a shot and broke in—but your uncle was dead!"

Stephen Brand staggered to his feet.

"Dead!" he gasped out. "Oh, it's horrible! To think that while I was talking to you such a thing should happen!"

"Pull yourself together, old chap," murmured Peter. "But you'd no doubt like to get back to London. We'll come with you. Paddy can drive you in your car, while I go in one of mine."

"Thanks," muttered Brand dully.

Looking dazed and almost overcome with

distress, he left Penton Villa with the detective and Paddy.

Driving a tremendously fast car, Peter quickly got ahead of Paddy and Brand, and in just under half an hour drew up outside the London house of Mr. Morris.

He was admitted at once by Inspector Hale, the divisional police chief, and he entered the library—the scene of the tragedy.

"It's a terrible but obvious affair, Trayle," said the inspector. "Mr. Morris was found sitting in that chair over here. He was shot, and still clutched a revolver in his hand."

Peter was about to ask a question, but Inspector Hale anticipated him.

"I know what you're going to ask," he said quickly. "The only finger-prints on the gun were those of the dead man. He was alone in the house, his nephew having gone out about half an hour before the shot was heard by one of my men. Ten minutes later I phoned you."

"What kind of a sound was it?" inquired Peter.

"Oh, according to the constable, it was just an ordinary pistol report, a bit muffled, of course," the inspector replied. "There can be no doubt that Mr. Morris committed suicide. He left a note which proves it absolutely."

Peter read through a short typewritten note that was handed to him. It said:

"For reasons of my own, I am ending my life. Inside the red book on the third shelf is my will. Good-bye!"

"BENJAMIN MORRIS."

The signature was, as Peter saw, written in the flowing handwriting of his old friend.

"Inside the red book was a will, as he had mentioned," said the inspector. "It seems that he left all his money to his sole surviving relative, Stephen Brand."

Paddy and Stephen Brand just then entered the room.

"Well, I'll be getting along," said the police chief, moving to the door. "Good-bye, all!"

It was plain that Stephen Brand was deeply grieved.

"Terrible! Terrible!" he repeated, in mumbling tones.

"I know just how you must feel," murmured Peter sadly. "Why not go for a walk outside? It might help you to get over it."

"I think I will," muttered Brand, hardly repressing a shudder on glancing fearfully about the room. "It's—it's been a great shock to me, although, as you know, I almost anticipated it."

With that, he left Public Defender No. 1 in the room with Paddy.

Hearing the front door close, Paddy turned to Trayle.

"Gosh—I'm sorry, guv'nor," he cried. "Mr. Morris was the last person in the world I should have expected to take his own life."

"He didn't!" Peter snapped out the words from between clenched teeth. "Benjamin Morris was murdered!"

## The Soot Clue!

FROWNING in deep thought, Peter walked slowly round the room, and at the fireplace he stopped.

"Look!" said Peter, pointing to the open hearth. "What do you make of that?"

Just in front of the fireplace grate was a

small heap of soot, freshly fallen down out of the chimney.

"Looks just like soot to me," commented Paddy. "What does it mean to you?"

"Either a lot, or just nothing!" was Trayle's cryptic remark. "I think I'll take a look upstairs, while Brand is out. His room might contain something interesting."

It was the wardrobe in Brand's room that interested Peter most. He drew a magnifying glass from his pocket and began to examine the hanging suits of clothes.

One jacket he examined for quite a while, and gave a nod of satisfaction.

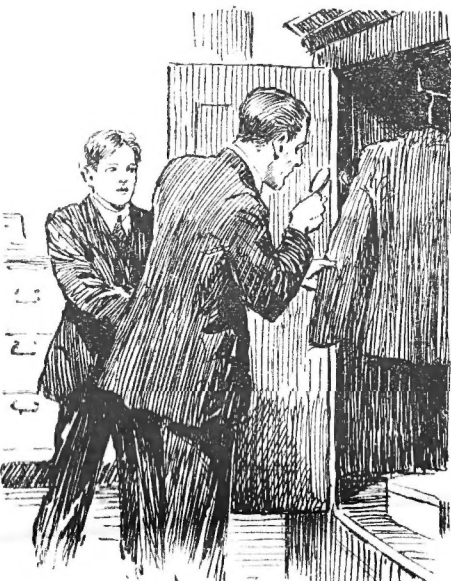
"Traces of soot on one shoulder and down a sleeve, Paddy," he remarked. "I rather fancy that Mr. Stephen Brand removed some soot from his clothes just recently."

A quick examination of a clothes-brush in the room confirmed Peter's theory, for on the tips of its bristles could be seen specks of fresh soot.

"So far, so good," muttered the young detective, and then a grim note crept into his voice. "I'm beginning to see things more clearly now, Paddy. Come on!"

Wondering exactly what fact seemed clear to his chief, Paddy followed Peter downstairs and into the library once more.

It was the fireplace which now claimed Trayle's attention. He stood in the hearth, peered keenly up the chimney, and finally pushed up his arm to its fullest extent.



One jacket Peter examined for quite a long time.

His outstretched hand touched a hard, metallic object and he nodded eagerly.

"Just what I thought," said Peter. "I know now that my suspicions of a murder having been done were correct."

He drew the object down from out of the chimney. Paddy saw what it was, and gasped in amazement.

"It surprises you, Paddy?" grinned Peter. "I thought it would. But we'll prepare a further surprise for a certain gentleman, I think."

For fully ten minutes Peter Trayle was busy in the library, and at the end of that time he took up the telephone.

The number Peter asked for was that of the police station, and he was quickly speaking to Inspector Hale.

"Hullo, inspector," he said. "I've discovered several things about the murder—"

"Murder?" interrupted the police chief. "What on earth are you talking about?"

"The murder of Mr. Morris," was Peter's quiet answer. "Will you come along at exactly five minutes to four? You will? Right—ho—and thank you, inspector."

By the time the amazed Inspector Hale reached the library of the house, Stephen Brand

had returned from his walk and was there with Peter and Paddy.

"Thanks for turning up, inspector," smiled Peter. "Now, please don't think I'm mad if what I do next surprises you. I want to ask Mr. Brand a few questions."

"Oh, carry on!" at once exclaimed Brand.

"Right!" said Peter, turning to him. "By your unfortunate uncle's death you have become a rich man. Now, if you had wanted to bring about your uncle's death—"

"I shouldn't have been visiting you, twenty miles away, when my uncle was shot!" butted in Brand.

Inspector Hale frowned.

"Look here, Trayle," he snapped, "Mr. Brand was actually with you at the time a shot was heard inside this house! How do you explain that?"

"Very simple!" Peter retorted, with a glance at his watch. "In another five seconds you will see."

But almost before Peter had finished speaking the inspector and Brand were startled by a sudden sound!

It was the noise of a muffled revolver-shot!

For a brief second, terror showed in Brand's wide-staring eyes. He whirled round and looked towards the fireplace, as a faint trickle of soot fell gently into the hearth.

He had not recovered himself, before Peter pointed an accusing finger straight at him!

"I want that man arrested for murder, inspector!" snapped Trayle.

The dead man's nephew started back, his face grey with fear. He was trembling and could not steady the twitching of his lips. His nerve left him completely.

Inspector Hale jumped to his feet and took a tight grip on the man's arm.

"Make sure of him, inspector," said Peter. "He killed Benjamin Morris and by an amazingly cunning scheme sought to make it appear as suicide. Look!"

The detective went to the fireplace and pulled out a revolver, to which was fixed a box-like attachment.

"See this?" he murmured. "It's a gun connected up with a timing device, such as is used on a time bomb. This gun can be made to explode at any given time, by the setting of this dial. Brand shot his uncle, placed a revolver in his grasp, and then set this timed revolver up the chimney. It fired a blank cartridge, causing the muffled report heard by the constable. Brand, meanwhile, had motored quickly down to my house, thinking to establish a certain alibi."

"Gosh!" gasped the inspector. "But how about the note?"

"Forged!" replied Peter, briefly. "Brand wanted to make sure that the will would be found, at the same time making it appear that those were the last words of his uncle. When the revolver in the chimney went off, as I made it do just now, the explosion was loud and harmless, but sufficiently violent to cause some soot to fall!"

"And we found some soot on his clothes," chimed in Paddy.

Peter Trayle nodded.

"Yes, that was a vital clue," he admitted. "But not the real one that made me suspect that a murder had been committed. Brand made one great mistake!"

"What was that?" asked Paddy, and Inspector Hale together.

Peter produced the typewritten note.

"Not knowing his uncle well, Brand was unaware that he was colour-blind!" he cried. "He could not distinguish colours and could not have known that the book containing the will was a red one. In fact," he added, "Mr. Morris had a habit of always referring to his books by name. That was what made me suspicious from the start!"

And so the case against Stephen Brand was proved—but his villainy might never have been suspected, had it not been for the cleverness of Peter Trayle, Public Defender No. 1!

(Don't miss the thrilling tale of Peter Trayle in next Friday's COMIC CUTS.)

## CHIRPYCHAT



ANOTHER RECORD NUMBER OF CHORTLES.

"HALLO, Bob! Did you come by appointment?"

"No—by bus!"

"Whoa! Lend me a bit of brown paper to wrap up this pair of boots with."

"I haven't got any brown paper."

"Yes, you have. Unroll one of your cigars!"

"Cheeky chump! I suppose you think you're smart?"

"Ee, I were an awful smart lad when I were at school. Ay! On my first day at school the teacher told me to sit on a form for the present."

"Well?"

"I was still sitting there at the end of the day."

"What for?"

"For the 'present'!"

"Phew! What a trial you must have been. Which remembers me! Which would you rather be, an engine-driver, or a school-teacher?"

"I'd rather mind the train than train the mind. I guess!"

"Well said, old sock! Lend me a fiver, will you?"

"Not likely! I have to work for my living!"

"Tut, tut! Isn't it awful what some people will do for money?"

"Bah! Doesn't it worry you to owe so much money as you do?"

"No fear! Why should I worry over other people's troubles?"

"Brrr! You're a lazy loafer! Why don't you try to find a situation?"

"I'm in one now."

"You are? What kind?"

"An awkward situation, because I haven't got a situation!"

"You want to look at the advertisements in the newspaper. Don't you take in a morning paper?"

"Yes—if I'm up before my neighbour!"

"Like that, is it? Did you get up first this morning?"

"No. You see, he's been earlier of late. At first he was last, but lately he's been first, and the last time I was first the newspaper was late, so he got it first although he was last. Do you follow me?"

"Not if I can help it! But why don't you earn some money with your voice? If I was you, I would."

"Pooh! You can't sing!"

"I can! I once sang at a village concert."

"Well, that's not proof that you can sing."

"But the fact that I'm alive is!"

"Haw, haw! You'll be telling me the audience clapped their hands presently."

"So they did—over their ears!"

"Truth will out! But, I say, my barber told me he would rather shave five Scotsmen to one Englishman any day."

"Indeed! Why? Doesn't he like Englishmen?"

"Oh, yes. But he gets more for shaving five customers than he does for one!"

"Oo, leave off! By the way, we've got dozens of keys in our house, and yet not one of them will fit any of the locks."

"Then what's the use of keeping them, you chump?"

"Well, we shouldn't be able to play the piano without them!"

"Goal! Canst tell me where I can get a good cheap lunch?"

"Sure. At the Hotel de Swizzle. Good roast beef only a bob a plate."

"And what do they charge for the gravy?"

"Nothing!"

"And how much for the bread?"

"That's free, too."

"Fine! I'll go and have some bread and gravy!"

"What did you think of my play last night?"

"Not bad. But I thought the milkmaid's cheeks were much too red."

"Why? All milkmaids have red cheeks."

"Your mistook, laddie. Milkmaids are 'pail' girls!"

"Faints! Didst hear about old Billson throwing a can of benzine on the fire?"

"No. What happened to him?"

"He hasn't benzine since!"

"Have a care, sir! Are those two collie dogs yours?"

"Sure! I've named them Chips and Comic Cuts."

"What ever for?"

"Because of their splendid tails (tales)!"

"Bravo! See you next week, old knut!"



The Red Rovers Are At Their Best In This Fine Yarn.

# THE TELL TALE WATCH

Being the adventures of Terry Flanagan and Tom Armstrong of the famous Tynecastle Rovers Football Club, assisted by the comical capers of Uncle Joe, the saucy parrot, and William, the intelligent monkey.

## The Drowning Boy.

It was a snowy night in Tynecastle. Traffic churned the white flakes into slush, making the surfaces of some of the streets extra dangerous. It was very cold, and a film of ice covered the river which flowed through the city.

Along the embankment came Tom Armstrong and Terry Flanagan, hurrying to get home, and in front of them trudged a boy, his head bent, his hands in his pockets.

"Look at that poor youngster," said Tom. "Tough luck being without an overcoat on a night like this."

Suddenly a car came slithering through the slush, and went into a bad skid. Completely out of control, it shot straight at the boy, looking as if it would pin him against the embankment wall. But, just in the nick of time, the boy got his hands on to the top of the parapet, and managed to scramble up as the car crashed against the wall, the driver being uninjured.

Although out of danger now, the boy instinctively stepped back, forgetting his perilous position, and then he swayed, flinging his arms out in an effort to regain his balance, whilst Tom and Terry raced to try to help him.

But the chums were too late. The boy dropped with a crash on to the thin ice, and went plunging through, vanishing from the sight of Tom and Terry, who leant over the parapet.

Suddenly they saw the boy's arm feebly break through the ice, and in a moment they realised that either he could not swim, or else he was unable to try, perhaps owing to the shock of the icy water.

"Get a rope, Terry!" cried Tom, flinging off his overcoat, and buttoning his jacket.

Then he took a header into the open water which was caused by the breaking of the ice, and so terrific was the cold that it seemed to chill his very blood. It took all his breath away, so that he sank like a stone at first, feeling as if he were powerless.

But quickly he began to strike out, and he rose to the surface, gasping terribly, catching a glimpse of a line of people staring down at him from the embankment wall.

"There he is!" rose a shout; but Tom was so dazed that the cry sounded almost like a far-off whisper.

He did not know if the onlookers were speaking of him or the boy, but suddenly he caught a glimpse of a dark object amongst the floating fragments of ice. It was the boy, face downwards, already sinking, and, though Tom's hand seemed so cold that it had no strength in it, he managed to grip the drowning youngster's coat and turn him over.

Then came the crash of a rope striking the thin ice near by, and Tom heard Terry's wild shout.

"Hang on, Tom!" Somehow the Red Rovers' skipper managed to obey, and he and the drowning boy were pulled in to some steps, amidst roars of cheers.

What happened next was more like a dream to Tom, but his senses began to come back as he felt himself being hustled into a house, where his clothes, already like boards as the water in them froze, were dragged off him.

The boy was being attended to as well, and fortunately they both made a surprisingly quick recovery, due to the fact that aid had been so near and had been given so swiftly.

Bobby Brown was the youngster's name, and he was a homeless orphan. He tried to thank Tom, but stumbled over the words, and the Rovers' skipper smilingly told him not to worry.



In spite of the intense cold Tom managed to grasp the youngster's coat.

Perhaps it was because he had saved the boy from death that made Tom feel anxious to do something more for him, and, after talking things over quickly with Terry, they decided to take him home to Mrs. Wilson's house, where they lodged.

Tom went through to the kitchen and told her what had happened, making light of his gallant deed, and her heart was touched. She took to Bobby just as quickly as Tom and Terry had done, and she offered to make up a bed for him, and she prepared more food, so that he could share the chums' supper.

Again Bobby tried to express his deep gratitude, but, though words failed him, his honest, steady eyes showed what he was feeling, and as he went upstairs he clung to Tom's hand as if he was holding on to a big brother who had come to help him.

In the chums' sitting-room were the famous mascots of the Red Rovers—Uncle Joe, the well-educated parrot, and William, the almost-human monkey.

Bobby's eyes opened wide with amazement when he saw the mascots. Quickly, however, that feeling became delight, for, of course, he thought the pair were great fun, and he made friends with them at once.

The boy went to bed soon after supper, but before he turned in he told Tom and Terry that he had been tramping for months, trying to find work.

"I've got an idea we can get him a job at the ground," said Tom, after Bobby was asleep. "I'll take him to see Mr. Falconer in the morning."

Mr. Falconer was the chairman of the Red Rovers, and he took a liking to the boy, too.

"Mind you, it is a bit of a risk, and it is very unusual to give a job to someone we know so little about, Tom," he said, "but I would like to help the poor little chap."

So a job was found for Bobby at the football ground, where he quickly became a prime favourite, for he was so willing, so cheerful, and, no matter what he was asked to do, he tackled his task with a smile.

But there was one person at the ground who did not take to Bobby, and that was a man named Watson. He had been trying to get his wages increased, though he was not worth a penny more than he was being paid, and he said he could have done Bobby's work as well as his own.

"They could have given me a rise of half what they're paying that kid," he grumbled. However, Watson's growls did not get him anywhere, and he kept his discontent to himself after a time.

Bobby and the mascots became tremendous chums, and when the merry pair were not with Tom and Terry they were generally to be found with the boy. Indeed, they were so fond of him that they showed him the way they sneaked into cinemas without paying, but he did not join them in this little game.

"You ain't got no pluck, Bob, mate," said uncle, though he did not mean it unkindly.

## The Rovers v. Portington Town.

BOBBY was looking forward very much to watching his new chums play their first home match since he had been given his job. This match was against Portington Town, and if anybody was going to yell like mad for the Rovers it was Bobby.

Indeed, so loudly did his voice ring out that Uncle Joe perched up so that he could stare into Bobby's mouth and try to find out how he did it, whilst the Tynecastle corner man thought of sending in a complaint.

And the "Ouch!" that William gave a moment later when uncle hit him was no where near as loud as Bobby's cheering.

It was a great match, between two fine sides, and played in the best sporting manner. For forty-five minutes the two teams went at it hammer and tongs, and again and again

each goal had a narrow escape, but half-time came without any score.

"E's got brass buttons on it, Billyum," said Joe, after listening to Bobby in the early part of the first half.

Then uncle stared round suspiciously, to find that his friend had vanished.

"Ere, mate," cried Joe, "Billyum's slipped off. I bet 'e's gone in to sneak some tuck!"

Knowing that a meat tea was being prepared for the two teams to enjoy after the match, Bobby thought he ought to go in search of the almost-human monkey, though he did not want to miss any more of the game than he could help.

"Let's be quick, uncle!" he said.

"Yes, mate, let's get back before we start," said Joe.

Sure enough, William was scouting round stealthily in search of tuck, and Bobby found him in a passage beyond the dressing-rooms. When he saw that he had been discovered William began to whistle carelessly, whilst he helped himself to a cigarette, and then he started to chatter. But, of course, Bobby did not understand animal talk, though Joe did.

"Don't you believe the villin, Bob boy," said uncle. "E said 'e had to go and see a gent about some nuts."

Bobby hurried the mascots to the ground, and he was just in time to see a wonderful display of passing between all five of the Tynecastle forwards. The ball went from boot to boot, none of the Portington defenders touching it, and Tom finished up with a simply colossal drive, right out of the goalie's reach.

"Goal!" yelled Bobby, almost cracking his throat in his efforts to make his voice sound above everybody else's.

"Did you say somethin', mate?" asked uncle, and got his beak punched by William for asking a silly question.

That was the only goal scored so far, and the visitors struggled with all their might and main to get an equaliser, but they just could not manage it, and the Rovers won a magnificent game by one goal to nil.

Wild with delight, Bobby went into the dressing-room with his chums, feeling ever so happy, until he suddenly heard Jack Steel's startled voice.

"Why, my notecase is missing," he said.

"And so is my watch,"

In a moment the other lads were examining their pockets, to find that a thief had been at work and helped himself to anything worth taking.

"I'm glad I brought my old tin watch," said Tom, who possessed a gold one, given him for scoring fifty goals in a season, but, fortunately, he had left it at home.

Of course, there was a tremendous uproar, and the club officials came hurrying to the dressing-room, and all sorts of inquiries were made. Several times Bobby thought he saw men glancing suspiciously at him, and suddenly Watson pointed at him.

"I saw that kid sneak in soon after the second half started," he said. "What was he after? That's what you got for giving a job to a young tramp you know nothing about. Come on, what do you know about it?"

Bobby's face grew white, but he managed to explain why he had gone into the building, his answer bringing a scornful laugh from Watson.

"Are you sure you didn't go into the dressing-room, my lad?" asked Mr. Falconer.

"Yes, sir!" replied the boy; and then he turned on Watson. "And I saw you go in, too, about a quarter of an hour before the game ended," he cried.

"Course you did!" snapped Watson. "I went along to see about the hot water and things like that."

"There was no need for you to do that," said the trainer.

"Well, I often do," answered the groundsman. "I went straight to the bath-rooms, had a look round, and came back. It was that boy did the job, soon after the start of the second half."

"What's this?" cried Tom at that moment, bending over some old jerseys and picking up a watch. "Why, it's my old tin one!" he said. "I guess the thief didn't think it worth taking, and he clucked it away. And, look—look! It was going during the interval, but it has stopped—and stopped at twenty to five, when it was flung down."

"That's ten minutes before the game stopped," said Terry. "Bobby was watching the game then, because I saw him."

"And that was about the time you were in the building, Watson," Mr. Falconer said coldly.

"Well, I never went in the dressing-room, sir," muttered the man.

Meanwhile, the mascots had been trying to get gifts from the people with cars and motor-bikes, but with not much success. Presently they hopped into a motor-bike and side-car, waiting for the owner. But he did not come along, and then William pulled up a folded tarpaulin, and began to chatter excitedly.

"Alves, mate!" cried Joe, peering at the heap of watches and purses that lay under the tarpaulin.

The excited shouts of the mascots brought other people to the spot, and quickly it was discovered that the bike and side-car belonged to Watson, who was promptly handed over to the police.

"Oh, thank you!" said Bobby to the mascots, when he learnt that they had put the finishing touch to proving his innocence.

"O.K., mate!" uncle said. "Take us out and buy us one!"

(Don't forget to have some more fun and thrills with the Red Rovers in next Friday's COMIC CUTS.)



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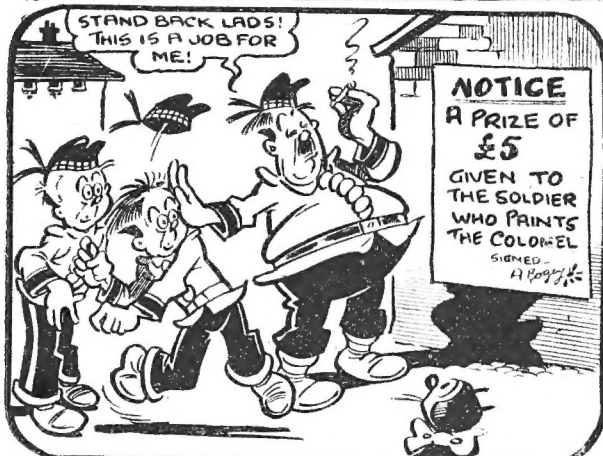
## BOYS CINEMA

On Sale Tuesday, February 12th, at all Newsagents.



# PLUM AND DUFF

## THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE



1. One bright morn, a spot of glad news was posted upon a wall in the camp of the Bold Brigade. "Coo!" piped Plum, to Duff. "Look at that!" "Eyes right, you two!" sniffed Sergy Suet, coming along and presenting them with a slap or two. "Corks! A fiver to the soldier who paints the colonel!"



2. Sergy thought it was almost too good to be true. "Yocks!" he blithered. "I'm the man for that lark!" Saying which, he bounded into Bogey's billet with a can of paint. "Ah! There he is—bless his old side-whiskers!" he carolled. "Sleeping like a log!" "Sounds as if he's sawing it!" said Duff.



3. "Now to earn that fiver," sniggered Sergy. "Watch me, you small boys!" And he proceeded to slap the paint all over the colonel's features in truly generous fashion. "Say when, sir!" he tootled. "You should have seen the way old Bogey coloured up. 'What's all this?' he yapped, waking himself.



4. "Ah! I knew you'd be surprised, sir!" blithered old Three-stripes. "I'm a fast worker, I am. How's that, and how about that fiver?" Grinning all over his face, Sergy showed the colonel a mirror. "Don't you look nice?" he cooed.



5. "Wow! That's a personal reflection!" barked the old war-waging expert. "How dare you?" "Tee-hee! Sergy won't get a look-in now," tittered Plum, to Duff. "He'll have to look out!" And—biff! Bogey's boot removed Suet.



6. "Well, well!" smirked Duff. "Having been shown how not to paint the colonel, how about having a shot for that fiver?" "Brother, it's as good as in our pockets," replied Plum, as he painted a perfect portrait of the old lad.



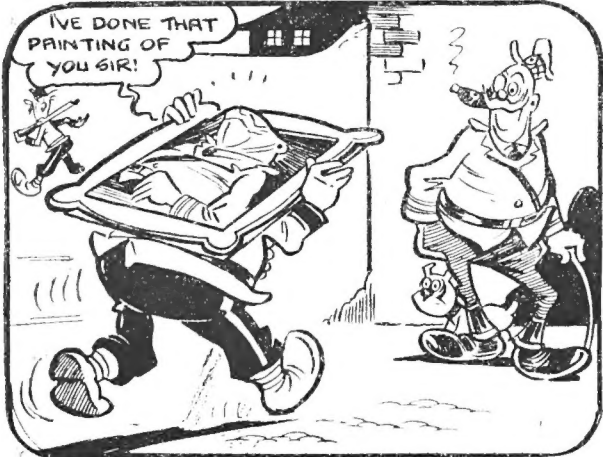
7. "A speaking likeness," chirruped Duff. "Let's go and get a frame." But meanwhile Sergy was framing up an artful plan. "I have a pressing need for a picture, too," he grinned, artfully pressing a blank canvas on to the kid's work of art.



8. That did the trick a treat. Sergy removed the blank canvas and found an impression of the colonel upon it. "Ah! That old man can't fail to be impressed by this," thought the Suetty one to himself. "All I need now is a frame. Heigh-ho!"



9. Having secured the said frame and parked it neatly and nicely round the picture, Sergy gave himself three cheers for luck and waltzed off. "Now to find the colonel and collect the cash!" he carolled, balancing the portrait on his topknot.



10. "Ah! I've got a good head for things, I have," said old Sergy to himself, as he galloped across to where the colonel stood. "He'll think I'm a swell artist." But his head was pushing up a portion of the canvas, you see, causing it to swell up. Sergy, however, knew nix of this. "Oh, sir!" he cried.



11. "I've brought the most delightfulest portrait of you. There— isn't it gorgeous? And so hand-some, too!" But when Bogey saw what the swelling of the canvas had done to his face, he almost swallowed his eyeglass. "Great pip and little fishes!" he gasped. "Can that be me? Do I look like that?"



12. "Exactly so, sir," purred Sergy. "What do you think of it?" "Not much, you impudent rascal!" hooted Bogey, slamming down the picture over Sergy's head. "This way for a wallop!" But as he removed Sergy, Bogey very thoughtfully presented the kids with a fiver. Generous of him, wasn't it?